The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

From time to time even the most persistent optimist is touched with an autumn mood, feels a chill in the air and puts on the mantle of Jeremiah. You can always find ground for lamentation if you look for it; and if you look for it you can always find ground for hope. Our view of life depends largely on our state of mind and body; the world is a happy enough place when things are going well with ourselves, and a vale of tears when they are not. Consequently no man should be judged by an isolated utterance. It does not follow that he is inconsistent because he contradicts this week something he said the week before last—probably some change of circumstance has in the interval changed his mood and his mind. After all, the mind has its own seasons; often no more than a day separates its summers from its winters; and who shall marvel if a July philosophy loses its leaves in December?

But every man has certain predominating qualities, and you can roughly catalogue him in accordance with those. In this way I should class Dr. Frank Crane with the optimists. He has for long past been contributing a daily essay to certain newspapers, and none occupying that pulpit could preach an everyday gospel of dissatisfaction and despair and still draw the enormous audiences he has secured. "Human Confessions" (6s.; John Lane) is the fourth collection he has made of his five-minutes' essays, and their genial worldly-wisdom is as stimulating a tonic as the average run of mankind could require. Once or twice he is inconsistent, in the stupidly literal sense of the word, but nobody could for long write an essay every day, through all fluctuations of health and humour, and be otherwise. He tells you, for instance, "I can conceive of no more repellent thing than growing old. And there is no need of it." Then in a later essay he admonishes us, "There is only one thing we have to do, and that is to grow old."

And when he reflects upon literature he is apt to become pessimistic. He regrets that "we have no self-respect. We edit ourselves too much. This is one of the subtle bad habits of an age of too much

Photo by H. Waller Barnett. **Mr. Stacy Aumonier,**

whose new novel, "Heartbeat," has been published by Messrs. Hutchinson.

reading. We contract a literary self-consciousness. We do not think; we recollect what we have seen printed." I should have thought those who had no self-respect did not edit themselves enough; but I may be wrong. He agrees with the father of all pessimists that there is nothing new under the sun. "Many writers strive to tell something new," he says. "They need to be reminded of the truth contained in a fine passage which Goldsmith struck out of his 'Vicar of Wakefield.' Dr. Johnson mentions it: 'When I was a young man, being anxious to distinguish myself, I was perpetually starting new propositions. But I soon gave this over; for I found that generally what was new was false.'" Instead of commenting on the significant fact that Goldsmith struck this out, Dr. Crane adds, "The greatest genius in literature does but express for the people what they already know. He gives voice to their dumb convictions." Yet we know of authors who were ahead of their times and so far from expressing the dumb convictions of their contemporaries that their own generation did not understand them. All the material we have to work with has no doubt been in the world from the beginning, but we can make new things of it; and a writer is not debarred from new thoughts because all the words he can clothe them with have long been in the alphabet.

To take Dr. Crane in another pessimistic mood, he declares, "Literature is intrinsically false. It may hold the mirror up to life, but it is a cracked mirror, or warped. Novels have plots; in real life there is no plot, only an undramatic tangle. Plays have climaxes; in real life there is no climax, we go on living. In books are characters; as a matter of fact we are none of us characters, but all sorts and kinds jumbled into one personality. . . . Life is happy. Literature is tragic." Now all these are only half-truths. There are really more characters in modern life than in modern books, and I suspect that the Doctor is not much of a novel reader or he would not have complained that novels have plots, for that nowadays is what half of them have not. And you have only to read the newspapers to know that he errs in supposing "in real life there is no plot." These are mostly pretty lurid plots; but there are others which do not get into the papers and turn on a man's efforts to realise his ambitions, on his rivalries in love, art, commerce. That sort is as common in life as in fiction. It is an exaggeration, too, to say "in real life there are no climaxes." There are frequent climaxes, though they do not invariably end in death. Nor can you cramp either life or literature within such a phrase as "Life is happy. Literature is tragic." Would our two million unemployed agree that life is happy, and are we to understand that such things as "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "The School for Scandal," "Tristram Shandy," and "Pickwick" are not literature? The truth is that, like literature, life is neither all comedy nor all tragedy; it is a blend of both.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Alec Waugh,**

whose new novel, "The Lonely Unicorn" (Grant Richards), was reviewed in the July BOOKMAN.

Photo by Nigel F. Wigston. **Mr. W. MacLeod Raine,**

whose new romance, "Man-Size," Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton are publishing this month.

But there is more than enough of homely wisdom and heartening philosophy in Dr. Crane's essays to make ample amends for these lapses, and even for one other. I think his advice on "How to Write" a little dangerous. "Almost all instructions I have ever read upon the writing of stories, essays, and other merchandise to sell to publishers," he remarks, "emphasise the necessity of having something to say before you set out to say it. Have a good yarn in mind, they tell us, and then write it out; have an idea and express it as simply as

possible." He confesses he has never been able to work on that plan; that he sits down without knowing what he is going to write and wishes his pen "God-speed!" adding: "My rule, therefore, for budding authors is: Go to it! Take a pen and watch it run. If you have luck, good! If not, there is much farming to be done." This method may suit his own temperament, but it is demoralising advice to give to young writers all and sundry. When an author has lived long enough to have experienced much and thought more, he may perhaps write good essays without stopping to think, but I feel sure that without some preliminary planning even he could write no story worth reading.

Photo by Marie Léon. **Mr. W. H. Hudson,**

the distinguished naturalist and man of letters, whose death last month we record with deep regret. We have published articles on Mr. Hudson and his work from time to time; the latest, by George Sampson, appeared in THE BOOKMAN for October, 1919.

Of our younger essayists there is none more thoughtful or who writes more attractively than Gilbert Thomas, and I am not surprised that his "Things Big and Little" (3s. 6d.; Chapman & Hall) has just been reissued in a new and cheaper edition. Mr. Thomas is an idealist who is not blind to the darker aspects of human character. He is acutely sensible of life's little ironies, and if in these essays he is ever angry or bitter it is against man's inhumanities to man, and the crude social barbarisms we still tolerate as part of the code of our civilisation. He can use words that have teeth in them when he is writing of wrongs and injustices, but brings a catholic sympathy and a charm of style to the handling of happier themes. In a rare pessimistic mood he falls from grace and pours scorn on contemporary reviewing, opening with an assertion that "the day of sober and honest criticism is almost gone." This is a complaint that has been made in every generation since criticism began. There may have been excuse for it in unregenerate days when the *Quarterly* and *Saturday Review* went raging about seeking whom they might devour; but criticism, in the main, was never soberer nor more honest than now. Certainly there are still careless and indifferent critics, but it would be easy to name as many who are as conscientious as they are competent, and as sober, discriminating, impartial as it is good for any mortal to be.

Fairly representative of such critics and their work is Mr. Robert Lynd, and his "Books and Authors" (7s. 6d.; Cobden-Sanderson), which arrived on my table with Mr. Thomas's new edition. Mr. Lynd's book is divided between authors of the past and present; but whether he is passing judgment on Herrick or Wells, on Keats and Lamb, or Conrad and Arnold Bennett, he is equally outspoken and suggestive, and it is obvious that he at least is not of those Mr. Thomas denounces for reviewing books without reading them. Mr. Lynd has set forth his creed as a reviewer in an essay on "The Critic," and not a few of our latter-day reviewers, judging them by their work, would be ready to subscribe to it:

"Criticism, says the dictionary, is the art of judging. As a matter of fact criticism is something more than that. The good critic does a great deal more than deliver judgment on books and authors. He may at times play the part of the defending counsel rather than that of the judge. There are occasions on which he makes no attempt to hide the warmth of his feelings. He cannot announce a masterpiece as though a summary of pros and cons expressed what it meant to him. That is why I think of a critic as a portrait-painter rather than a judge. The portrait-painter reveals the character of his subject. He does not label or analyse it so much as set before us a synthesis of all the most interesting things he has seen, felt and thought in observing it. The judgment is always there, but it is implicit rather than explicit. The author sits to the critic for his portrait. Even the book may be said—if we may put a slight constraint on

language—to sit to the critic for its portrait. . . . The critic must bathe his subject in the light of his own mind—his taste, his enthusiasm, his moral ideas, his knowledge. Hence criticism is an extremely personal thing. It relates, if one may adapt Anatole France's famous phrase, the adventures of masterpieces in the soul of the critic, or—to put it a little more precisely—in the intellectual and imaginative world of the critic. It is said that if we adopt this view we are denying the existence of any standards of criticism. This is not so. One may believe in the conscience while admitting that moral standards fluctuate." Mr. Lynd is faithful to that creed in "Books and Authors," and that he could make such a volume of sound and brilliant essays out of reviews and articles contributed to daily and weekly journals is no small tribute to the quality of present-day reviewing.

In his article on "Shelley in London," in the July BOOKMAN, Mr. Roger Ingpen mentioned that the house where Shelley had lodged in Half Moon Street, Piccadilly, had never been identified, and that in all probability it had been pulled down. "There was a little projecting window in Half Moon Street," wrote Mr. Ingpen, "in which Shelley might be seen from the street all day long, book in hand, with lively gestures and bright eyes, so that Mrs. Newton said he wanted only a pan of clear water and a fresh turf to look like some lady's lark hanging outside for air or song!" Lady Colefax has very kindly sent us a water-colour drawing of this house made by Mrs. Anne Johnstone in 1883, and Mrs. Johnstone, with whose permission we reproduce the sketch on this page, writes to say: "I made the drawing from the window of No. 45, Half Moon Street, where I was lodging in 1883 (June). The tradition that Shelley had lived in the house with the projecting window, which stood directly opposite, was very definite at that time. I made this rough but perfectly accurate drawing in colour of the façade as it then stood between two taller red brick houses very near the corner of Piccadilly. By a strange chance the drawing fell out from among some papers I was looking over a few months ago, and it seemed worth keeping. I had supposed it was lost. Then on reading the article about Shelley's lodgings in London in THE BOOKMAN, it seemed that it might be of interest to you." Both No. 45 and the Shelley house which was opposite have been demolished and rebuilt.

The house in Half Moon Street, Piccadilly, where Shelley lodged in 1813.
From a water colour sketch by Mrs. Anne Johnstone.

"The Plot," which Messrs. Methuen published a few days ago, is, like all but two of Mr. H. C. Bailey's books, an historical romance—the two exceptions being "The Suburban" and "Call Mr. Fortune," a volume of detective tales. He began to write early, while still an undergraduate at Oxford; his first novel, "My Lady of Orange," fell into the hands of Andrew Lang and was published on his recommendation. When he came down from Oxford Mr. Bailey at once joined the staff of the *Daily Telegraph* and has been connected with that paper ever since, doing a good deal of work as special correspondent; for some eight years he was its dramatic critic, and is now the *Telegraph's* leader-writer. "The Plot" is founded on the notorious Popish Plot of Titus Oates, and has a full-length study of that buckram rascal. It is in part a mystery story, one famous historical riddle besides the enigma of the Plot itself, the murder of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, being dealt with and a solution suggested. The novel is primarily a romance and has no sectarian bias.

Who is Miss Isabel Beaumont, whose "Secret Drama" won the £250 prize in Mr. Andrew Melrose's last annual Novel Competition? The name is a pseudonym and the author has published two earlier novels that were said to show unusual promise. The most her publisher is allowed to reveal about her is that she has lived all her life in Wandsworth and that when she brought her novel to him she had never before been into the West

Miss Isabel Beaumont,

author of "Secret Drama," which won the £250 in Mr. Andrew Melrose's latest Prize Novel Competition.

End of London. This must seem surprising, but after all, London is too much with some of our novelists, and there is plenty of life to be seen in a lot of other places. The "Secret Drama" of Miss Beaumont's story is the comedy, almost the tragedy, of intense life that is played out in the hearts and minds of her people. The study of Mrs Jesson, wholly sacrificing herself to the whims and welfare of her unresponsive daughter, Marie, is done with extraordinary knowledge and subtlety. Her love is proof against all tests, and she withers loyally in the shadow of Marie till she comes to feel that "Mother and suffering are synonymous terms." It is the characters that make the story, and they make it by turns grotesque, poignant, sensational, tragic—a story of strong interest and unusual literary quality.

In the death of Lord Northcliffe English journalism has suffered a very great loss. He was a man of ideas and of indomitable initiative. His opinions were his own; he had the courage of them, and was never afraid to take risks and act in accordance with his light. In little more than thirty years, he rose from such small beginnings as writing articles on "How to Make a Hand Camera," for Henderson's *Young Folks Paper*, to be a peer of the realm and a Napoleon of the press. His biography, which I hear is in preparation, should add one of the most vivid and romantic chapters to the romance of journalism.

Mr. Werner Laurie tells me he has had to postpone the publication of Mr. W. B. Yeats's Memoirs, "The Trembling of the Veil," but he expects to have the book ready early in October. Mr. Yeats has been living for some time in Galway, and there seems little likelihood of his revisiting London this year.

Mrs. J. O. Arnold,

whose new novel, "The Woman in Blue," has just been published by Messrs. Leonard Parsons.

The vogue of Herman Melville has been steadily increasing for some years past, and the author of "Moby Dick" is now to achieve the distinction of a handsome edition in twelve volumes, limited to 750 sets for England and America. Messrs. Constable are the publishers, and the first volumes are to be ready this month.

Mrs. Charlotte Bacon,

whose new novel, "The Grays," has been published by Mr. Jonathan Cape.

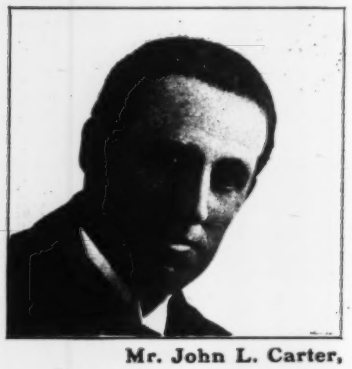
"Body and Soul," a new four-act play by Arnold Bennett, published by Messrs. Chatto & Windus, will be produced at the Regent Theatre this month.

Mr. Cecil Palmer has added "The Dover Road" and "The Bath Road" to his admirable revised and reprinted series of Mr. Charles G. Harper's "Histories of the Roads."

THE BOOKMAN.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

By 1914 Teixeira de Mattos stood, as Stephen McKenna says in "Tex" (10s. 6d.; Thornton Butterworth), "in the forefront of English translators; and, through his labours, translation had won a place in the forefront of English literature." This Memoir was written, however, not to glorify his work, but to reveal the delightful personality of the man himself. "Charm," writes Mr. McKenna, "which is so hard to analyse in the living, is yet harder to recapture from the dead; but, if the record of a single friendship can suggest loyalty, courage, generosity and tenderness, if a whimsical turn of phrase can indicate humour, patience and an infinite capacity for providing and receiving enjoyment, Teixeira's letters will preserve, for those who did not know him, the fragrance of spirit recognised and remembered by all who did." That passage indicates the scope and purpose of the book. Teixeira's own letters, in which he writes seriously or amusingly, sometimes flippantly, of his everyday doings and his opinions on authors, contemporary and otherwise—these and a selection of Mr. McKenna's replies are linked up with a running commentary and as much of biography as may be necessary. The book resolves itself into a brilliant, finely sympathetic



Mr. John L. Carter,

whose humorous novel, "Come Day, Go Day" was published recently by Mr. John Long.

character study of a curiously charming personality. It is a very human record; familiar, detailed, unaffected; so that you feel Teixeira lives more, and more naturally, in Mr. McKenna's easy, gracious prose than Hallam does in Tennyson's marmoreal verse. It is full of interest, and a model of what such memoirs ought to be.

Many who are intimate with the dramatic work of Thomas Dekker have never read "The Seven Deadly Sins of London," that prose allegory, or series of allegories, which is at least as remarkable as any of his plays. It has not been easily obtainable, and all who are interested in Elizabethan literature will be grateful to Mr. Basil Blackwell, of Oxford, for adding it to his excellent series of Percy Reprints (4s. 6d.) in an edition edited by H. F. B. Brett-Smith. Its pictures of the London of that day are touched in with a wonderfully terse and picturesque vividness. Dekker was a journalist of genius, with all the journalist's alert interest in the life about him. But he had more than the journalist's art in the use of words, and jewels a sentence occasionally with an almost Biblical magic of phrase. The humour and quaint conceits of the book smack of its period, and, as its first editor said, there is "perhaps no tract in our language which contains so many and such curious illustrations of the language, opinions and manners of our ancestors."

To understand and appreciate "Truant Youth," by Helen de Courcy Wilson (7s. 6d.; Sampson Low), it is necessary to be well acquainted with the unusual character of its heroine, Drusilla Joy. So it would be unfair to outline the plot here. But so skilfully and quickly does the author convey to the reader's mind an understanding of Drusilla, that by the time the really startling events of the story occur, all seems possible and believable. This is a decided triumph and proves the writer's power and ability. Very neatly is the plot woven together, with no loose ends nor false colourings; the result is cleanly outlined pattern—harmonious and satisfying. Miss de Courcy Wilson has insight and understanding of human nature, the gift of invention and the ability to write convincingly. These things should carry her far along the road of successful novel-writing.

Mr. D. Chadwick has written for the series entitled "Cambridge Studies in Mediæval Life and Thought," and the Cambridge University Press has published, a very competent and informing study of Langland's "Vision," and it is called "Social Life in the Days of Piers Plowman" (10s. 6d. net). Mr. G. G. Coulton, the editor of the series, who is University Lecturer in English at Cambridge, affirms in his general preface that "historians have the remedy in their own hands" when it is advanced with "only too much truth" that history is "neglected by the modern public," in comparison with physical science. They must choose problems as important as those of science, must treat them with equal accuracy, and it is thought that so doing they will command equal attention. We may not be able to see that any historical problems are on the same level with those of life and mind, or with those of practical science; we may not acknowledge that they are ever likely to command the same kind of attention in the same degree; we might be even disposed to regard it as regrettable supposing that they should and did; but this is not to say that we depreciate the quest in history or that we minimise the consequence of a rule in procedure which Mr. Coulton lays down when he says that, as in things of science so in dealing with records of the past, it is essential to mark clearly where facts end and inferences begin. The Cambridge Studies are described as appealing directly to "that craving for clear facts which has been bred in these times of storm and stress." It is proposed to safeguard the facts, leaving readers to judge inferences drawn therefrom on the merits of these. We should doubt very much whether Mr. Chadwick has had occasion to keep this rule in the forefront of his mind during the preparation of his admirable monograph; we should think that the counsel and its connotations are to him like a native habit. In any case his analysis of the "Vision," grouped under various heads, has enabled him, by means of facts and reasonable conclusions drawn therefrom, to give us a living picture of what it actually was—socially, mentally, religiously—to have lived in Langland's days. Secular and regular clergy, secular government, country and town life, wealth and poverty, mediæval womanhood, the religion of laymen—of such are the heads of sections, holding up a clear glass to all which was England in the fourteenth century. The text made use of is that of Skeat's three parallel versions, and those—probably many—to whom the English of the "Vision" is difficult, glossaries notwithstanding, even perhaps repellent, will find in these pages not only a graphic picture of its environment and period, but a presentation of its message and purport. As a study of social life it is calculated also to interest those whom the poem itself, even in a modernised version, might not attract at all.

Mr. W. Branch Johnson,

whose charming "French Folk: A Book for Vagabonds," is published by Mr. Cecil Palmer.

"More About the Noahs—and Tim Tosset," by J. F. Horrabin (2s. net; Cassell), will need no recommending to the countless youngsters who follow the doings of Japhet each day in the *Daily News*. They will be eager to possess this new Noah Book, in which Tim Tosset makes a welcome appearance. It is a nice dumpy-shaped book, attractively bound, and the pictures and printing are bold, clean, black-and-white work. Of course Mr. Horrabin's drawings are too well known to need any description. The book should prove a source of joy to every child who opens it.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

PHILIP GUEDALLA.

MR. PHILIP GUEDALLA is a fortunate young man, but his fortune has been won by his own efforts and talents. At an age when others are looking out for a profession and a career, he has made a brilliant reputation in literature and has attained a considerable standing in politics and at the Bar.

His school was Rugby and his college Balliol. At Rugby he worked hard and edited a periodical called (prophetically, one assumes) "The Meteor." At Balliol he gained a First in Mods. and a First in History, flamed into vivid oratory at the Union, acted with easy distinction at the O.U.D.S., and turned out much topical verse in the classical manner. His first two volumes were entitled "Ignes Fatui" and "Metri Gratié." In 1912 he bade the hierarchy of the highbrows at Oxford good-bye. At that time he had begun reviewing for the *Daily News* and *The New Statesman*, and still remains faithful to those journals. He was called to the Bar in the summer of 1913, and resolved to concentrate on Commercial and Common Law as a pupil of Sir Walter Schwabe, now the Chief Justice of Madras, in whose chambers he was placed by Lord Reading. It was about this time that he wrote a textbook on "The Partition of Europe, 1715–1815," which in its clarity of knowledge has been a boon to students. Another deft volume in which Guedalla took some part was "The Effect of War on Stock Exchange Transactions." During the world-struggle he was appointed legal adviser to the War Office Contracts Department, and afterwards to the Ministry of Munitions. Such responsibility would have been enough for most men; but Guedalla cheerfully undertook fresh and infinitely more complicated work in the reorganising of English industry under war conditions. Then came labour which absorbed him night and day in the control of the linen and flax trade. Guedalla tells some stories about the search for flax-seed all over the world, and its shipment to Ireland from remote places in the most difficult circumstances, that recall the exploits of the gentlemen-adventurers of Tudor days, but in honest guise.

It is a difficult combination this, of amalgamating literature with big practical concerns; nevertheless Guedalla still does it in his practice of law. He has strong political ambitions, and devotes what time he can to strengthening his position as Independent Liberal candidate for North Hackney, a constituency he is likely to win at the General Election, as he had made a great mark there by his rattling speeches and his flashing repartees to interrupters at his open-air meetings. Guedalla is a loyal supporter of Mr. Asquith, whom he holds in reverence, and there are not wanting prophets who recognise in this young and splendidly equipped candidate a future leader of Liberalism.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Philip Guedalla.**

Readers of THE BOOKMAN, however, will be much more interested in Philip Guedalla as *littérateur* and historian than Guedalla as lawyer and politician. His "Supers and Supermen," a series of magnificently etched character-studies, marked him, not as a coming man in ironic biography, but one who had arrived. He is peculiarly fitted to deal with notorious and famous figures because he has the intimate touch of the writer who can put himself in the place of his subjects, good or bad, and express them in terms of life.

He has consolidated his position as an historical writer by his subtle study of Napoleon III, in "The Second Empire,"* the best book written in our generation on a subject about which there is already an enormous bibliography, good, bad and indifferent—and especially bad. The Guedalla gloss of a picturesque but overly hectic period is written midway between the styles of Lytton Strachey and E. T. Raymond; and has a curious and convincing air of being done at first hand, although the author has read through a whole library to confirm his facts before putting life into them.

I have always believed that one can only summon up the past by, as it were, living in it. Documentation will produce a skeleton. The flesh must be put on with the eyes of the spirit.

The method of the book approximates to Hilaire Belloc's "The Girondin" and his "Marie Antoinette." I fancy that Guedalla has a higher opinion of Napoleon III than his book reveals. Certain little side-lights display Louis Napoleon as something more subtle and assured than a tricky charlatan following a lucky star. The man who could survive two immense blasts of ridicule in abortive attempts to repeat the triumph of the return from Elba; who could endure six years of imprisonment at Ham: who could wait with infinite patience for that Imperial

* "The Second Empire." By Philip Guedalla. 16s. (Constable.)

crown on which his eyes had always been fixed, and establish himself an equal of the sovereigns of Europe, was something more than an *opéra bouffe* adventurer. The exile came to England at a period which still savoured of the Regency:

"The age of Count D'Orsay and Lady Blessington was an echo of the great days of Mr. Brummell. There was a compact little world of wits and beauties, where Mr. Greville kept his wicked diary and ladies shook their curls at gentlemen in stars and ribands. The long shadow of Prince Albert had not yet fallen across the bright Victorian scene, and under the urbane consulate of Lord Melbourne the young Queen rode out daily with her court."

Teutonic, respectable, fussily-dignified, Victoria had a decided taste for the rococo. Witness her admiration for Napoleon and Eugénie, and later for Disraeli and John Brown. During the entente over the Crimea the gleaming French couple came to London in state:

"At Windsor the cheers died away, and they passed into the domestic silence of the royal circle, 'Vicky, with very alarmed eyes, making very low curtsies.' Upstairs there was a panic before dinner because the Imperial trousseau had not arrived. But some one had a blue silk dress; it might be made to fit, and wild-eyed women knelt stitching round the Empress. Half England was standing uneasily in its best. Then Eugénie swept down to dinner in her plain blue dress with a single flower on her pale bronze hair: it was a French victory."

The author refrains from following the example of many pseudo historians in placing the responsibility for the disasters of the Second Empire on Eugénie's shoulders: the Emperor's were broad enough for them. The first great tragedy was the dreadful end of the Mexican adventure:

"Maximilian was dead; Charlotte was mad; Morny was dead; Jecker dragged on until the Commune shot him; the French lay dead in their graves; and to Napoleon the sudden fall of an Empire in Mexico must have come with the vague menace of lightning below the horizon."

Another crisp, dramatic passage, curiously incorporating fiction with imaginative fact, is that ticking off the prelude to the Downfall:

"They were cheering in the streets of Berlin; and whilst Paris roared '*à Berlin!*' in the failing light, Nana was dying in her room on the boulevard, and in a garden at Blackheath Mr. Morley was telling the news to Mr. John Stuart Mill. The war had come."

The book is also a picture-gallery of delightfully malicious portraits. Guedalla's retouched impressions of Victor Hugo and Algernon Swinburne will make the irreverent chuckle.

I asked Guedalla why he had elected to cover such old ground again as that of the France of Napoleon III, and he told me that he was always fascinated by the epoch of the Bonapartes:

"I began with a strong interest in the costumes of the period of the amazing uncle and nephew, and from them I passed on to their eras and all the splendours, real and mock, of that age of war and intrigue. I have endeavoured, more than anything, to treat my subject of 'The Second Empire' in its true historical perspective, and not as the customary *chronique scandaleuse*."

I asked him about his reading, and he told me that as a boy he was seized by Carlyle's "Frederick the Great." He admires Hilaire Belloc's "Danton," and considers it (as most of us do) an infinitely better piece of work than his "Robespierre." Gibbon is his standard author, and he has just been reading for the first time Boswell's "Life of Johnson."

"When you ask me for my favourite novelists," he said, "I am in some little difficulty, for I have a number of admirations. First, I suppose, I place Henry James; he appeals to me, and I dare say I could tell you why but we won't stop for such an analysis at present. The same mental enjoyment, in a slightly different way, one gets in the perfect work of Joseph Conrad, and the infinitely less self-conscious work of H. G. Wells. But one is not always disposed for purely solemn reading; and I have the liveliest admiration for that best of modern humorists, Stephen Leacock. He is probably the best thing Canada has ever exported."

One of his considerable literary activities during the last few years was his revision of the entire proof-sheets of H. G. Wells's "Outline of History." H. G. had various scientific and sociological experts helping him in the compilation of the book, but he made Guedalla his supreme court of appeal. "The sheets came to me in great batches," said the latter, "and I pegged away at them. A rather funny thing was that one used to make unorthodox marginal notes, 'not for publication,' on the sheets, and these afterwards were duly printed and appeared as foot-notes. But not any notes could spoil that magnificent book."

I asked him how he managed to get so much journalistic and literary work done. "Well," he said, "one has long vacations; I handled those proofs in railway carriages, and even the busiest junior barrister can mark time if he wants to."

Questioned as to his hobbies, Guedalla admitted an extravagant admiration for the drawings of Max Beerbohm, of which he has ninety originals. An even more expensive luxury was furniture; but he has managed to break this dangerous taste off and subside into the pursuit of that beautiful ware—green Wedgwood. This is very costly stuff, too, but as there is very little of it, the new taste should be much less expensive than the old.

Despite of Philip Guedalla's love for literature and his splendid exercise of it, I fear, if his legal and political ambitions are fulfilled, which they are likely to be, his writing output will grow less and less; but I am confident, too, that even if he becomes Lord Chancellor or Prime Minister in the years to be, his fountain-pen will never be allowed to rust. A man with such a close and kindly—and cynical—observation of life will never entirely forsake the bent of his genius as one of the most acute and well-informed of contemporary social historians.

LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

THE READER.

THE IDEALISM OF JOHN BUCHAN.

By J. P. Collins.

CERTAIN irresistible qualities make themselves felt in practically all the novels of Mr. John Buchan. He mastered the romance of secret service long before the war, and his successes in this line look like surpassing those of his rivals, if any. They pilot us through an amazing succession of narrow escapes, but they rarely exaggerate character. If he has a formula it might very well be—a modest hero, a villain with extenuations, and the rigour of the game.

This refusal to allow vice or virtue to swagger about in jack-boots and bombast is worth a line of emphasis. Mr. Buchan has added worthily to the great white company of our favourite heroes in fiction. He allows them to enlarge upon the importance of a cause but not upon the importance of themselves; rather the other way. This is the code of your true soldier, who, after satisfying his sense of duty, sinks contentedly to insignificance for the sake of his flag. It was a certain affinity with the best fighting spirit, perhaps, that enabled our author to turn the war to account in the way of fiction when so many novelists were standing bewildered and inert. Perhaps this is because he drew his notions of conflict from a source long anterior to 1914. For it is easy to trace the paternity of his men of action. They are the sons of Ulysses of Ithaca, the petty monarch who left his "castled crag" behind him and went adventuring, to conquer more lands than he ever knew. For when he came back to his wife and his son and his dog, he was a local chieftain no longer. He was the founder of a long dynasty of heroes, and the model of wise, long-suffering, resourceful men. If he had predecessors in this vein, he eclipsed them all. For in himself he sums up that trade of guile in a good cause which began ancestrally in swamps, caves and forests, and developed stage by stage into what Fluellen called "the dispositions of the wars."

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

John Buchan.

"Prester John" first showed us what Mr. Buchan could do with this type of energist, in a grilling atmosphere of Portuguese venom and Zulu ferocity. It was a daring fancy to pluck an ancient legend out of the heart of Asia and make a title out of it for a new saga of South Africa. But like an old and magic scarf from Samarcand, this device served to freshen up a rather worn stage property, a zone of priceless rubies, and you accept these gems of fabulous wealth because of your respect for the less fabulous Prester John. You forget the sparkle and incantations of those rubies by comparison with the blaze of scenery Mr. Buchan calls into being, and the still more wonderful way in which he turns its distances and dangers to account. Something of the same wizardry turns up again in "Greenmantle," especially the gloomy Danube chapters; and again in "Huntingtower," where he builds up a kind of super-chess problem, and dazzles us with the ease and completeness of it all. He has done nothing better than the contrast between the baffling defiance of his *mise en scène* and the crash with which the superstructure of castle and climax falls to the ground. You bethink yourself of the nursery fable which scales the heavens with a beanstalk in a night, to demolish it the moment it has served its turn; and you realise how Mr. Buchan has mastered the art of construction as well as landscape and battle.

One recalls no spy-story of our time that compares with "Greenmantle," unless it be "Mr. Standfast" and "The Thirty-Nine Steps," but these rarely rise to the great momentum of the first, or fuse so well the ingredients of two or three continents under the spell of the Great War. One testimonial alone sets it in a place by itself, so far as I am concerned. It fell to my lot a couple of years ago to try and lessen the physical and mental torment of a man struck down in the fullness of his powers. He was a Scot and a scholar, a man of immense powers of mind, a traveller and a master of world affairs. He brought a crystal mind to bear upon the grim complexities of the war, and the far Colonial focus that helped him to see it steadily and see it whole, helped to lay bare, like a range-finder, any falsity of view. When I asked him which he preferred of all the books he had devoured in that sad twelve months, he replied, "Greenmantle." He had read it three times, he said, and hoped to read it a fourth. If there is a copy on the shelves of heaven, he is probably carrying that intention out. At any rate, those who knew Sir Maitland Park and his towering impatience with defects in any form, will appreciate this handsome bit of praise.

There remains for remark another aspect in Mr. Buchan's novels, besides their range of scenery and setting, their construction, and their handling of the great game of war. They reveal that psychology of

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race in which the Germans proved so lamentably void. You perceive it in the characterisation of his super-Prussians like Stumm, and hear in their talk the click of the military heel. You see it again in the cold-drawn impudence of "Black Stone," in "The Thirty-Nine Steps," and find it refreshing after the racing succession of puzzles and risks. But these are matters not beyond the compass of other practitioners in the same school, and I know no one since Seton Merriman who vies with Mr. Buchan in using so deftly this difference of race. He uses it like a warning pointer, to keep attention fixed when all the world's a screen with reams of film-adventure flickering past. Here, in the rapid chat of Sandy, is a specimen of what I mean :

"Germany's simplicity is that of the neurotic, not the primitive. It is megalomania and egotism and the pride of the man in the Bible that waxed fat and kicked. But the results are the same. She wants to destroy and simplify; but it isn't the simplicity of the ascetic, which is of the spirit, but the simplicity of the madman that grinds down all the contrivances of civilisation to a featureless monotony. The prophet wants to save the souls of his people; Germany wants to rule the inanimate corpse of the world."

Years ago one heard Mr. Buchan in a genial lecture dissect the character of his countrymen. It was as ruthless as the passage just quoted, but it had the antiseptic grace of humour, and it drew most laughter where it cut deepest, even in an audience where the majority were Scots. This is how such spiriting ought always to be done, and shows why Mr. Buchan comes out of the dusty joust of fiction with his lance unflawed. One might elaborate this view of shorter stories like those in "The Moon Endureth," and "The Path of the King," which is a procession of historic fancies rather than a tale, a transmigration of the hero-myth, as it were. But it would only amount to repeating what has been already said, in praise of the delicate temper, the fine scholarship, and the rare idealism that blend so easily in these narratives. No room remains for discussing his historical studies, his monumental records of the war, or monographs like "The South African Forces in France"—a book which kept me spellbound when contending with a temperature five above normal. But it is well worth noting that while the guile of Ulysses is the model for his heroes in romance, he demands something higher when it comes to facts, and usually the balance goes all the other way.

Hazlitt came pretty near the truth when he said that the difference between heroes and saints was this: that whereas your hero might be moved by some outward impulse, your saint must be actuated by internal faith. The same holds good, generally speaking, as a line of demarcation between the idealism of the pagan world and the idealism of Christianity, but they fuse to perfection in the code of chivalry, which was the fine flower and legacy of the ages miscalled "dark." Kenelm Digby, in that quaint treatise, "The Broad Stone of Honour," complained that the "philosophical history of chivalry" should have been so neglected by the chroniclers. Rightly viewed, it appears to be the only ethical thread traceable through the interests and movements and exploits which stud our records of the march of man. An inquiry into its evolution would be roughly commensurate with civilisation, and might be coeval with all time. Without laying down unnecessary claims, chivalry is indebted profoundly to literature, and fiction especially, with all its extravagances and deficiencies. Sometimes when we set visionary characters like Quixote or Hamlet on a level with real heroes like Bayard or Sidney, they more than hold their own; and man seems never more the heir of the divine than when he has been inspired to create a godlike type. In a way these figments of the mind are capable of laying a stronger hold on us than do the human beings of the past, however gifted or exalted. Who of us has not assented to that fine thought of the Spanish monk who was showing Wilkie through the monastery, and halting before some of its masterpieces on the walls, asked which were the true immortals, we or they?

I have said nothing of Mr. Buchan's achievement as a poet—from the verses intermingled with stories in "The Moon Endureth" to the gay Lallan lyrics in "Musa Piscatrix" or "Poems, Scots and English." My preference among his poems is the one that opens my favourite among all his books, his memoir of the gallant Montrose. Part of the amazing output of a crowded career, that book stands honourably on a shelf devoted to whatever relates to the finest emanation of Christian chivalry. In it we ascend to a higher plane than the tribe of Ulysses ever touched, and wing our flight, as Burke said, in a higher region of the air. It is a noble study of the everlasting paradox of sacrifice, or conquest by submission, where the bitter cup is accepted gaily, and the sanctions of justice are pledged for ever. But the key of the book is to be found in its lovely and fraternal dedication, worthy of the Bithynian lament of Catullus :

"Ah, no, 'tis we who fade and fail,
And you from time's slow torment free
Shall pass from strength to strength and scale
The steeps of immortality."

ARTHUR MACHEN.

By R. Ellis Roberts.

I

THERE are authors who are more to us than any individual book of theirs, just as there are authors who seem less than their masterpieces. "Paradise Lost" or "Areopagitica" mean something more magnificent to the mind than John Milton; but Charles Lamb is more than all his essays, and Johnson bigger than his own works or Boswell's biography. It is to the latter class that Mr. Machen belongs. Of living authors he alone, with Mr. Chesterton, furnishes the sensation that much of him, if not most of him, still remains unwritten, and will probably always remain unwritten. His last book, "The Secret Glory," which has beautiful

things, does not take his admirers any further than did "The Hill of Dreams," which was published fifteen years ago; but it is, if not so good as a story, full as was the earlier book of the strange beauty which has haunted Mr. Machen all his life, and whose wonder he has endeavoured to convey to a prosaic generation. He has always written of mysteries, and ultimately all his mysteries are the same mystery, are but different forms of the one search, visions of the one unattainable Grail. You can divide his work into the mystery of beauty, the mystery of horror and the mystery of satire—and he has perhaps been most successful with the mystery of horror. The influence of Poe is plain enough in Mr. Machen's early books, "The Four Impostors" and "The Great God Pan." In some ways Poe and Dickens may be called Mr. Machen's masters. His view of the horrible is different from Poe's. He is not so oppressed by it, and in certain episodes he is more successful, to my mind, than Poe in arousing horror in the reader without plunging him into the nethermost pit of despair as Poe does. Mr. Machen believes in horror; but he believes in beauty more. Poe saw the worm at the root of the tree of life: Mr. Machen believes in the permanence of beauty, in the transcience of evil, even while he knows that this is the time of the prince of this world.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Arthur Machen.**

"The Secret Glory" is the story of how one of the children of the other world tries to fit his life into the routine and convention of ordinary ways, and fails as is necessary. Ambrose Meyrick compromises, and though you may compromise and save your soul, you cannot bow in the House of Rimmon and be as free as the man who has never bowed. In detail "The Secret Glory" is a vehement attack on the public school system. The Celt has never taken kindly to the English public school: he values home and women too much, and is too keenly aware of how degraded the mob can become, especially a mob of youths. It is not that Mr. Machen believes that all boys are bullies or brutalised in obvious ways. The worst evil of the public school is generally proclaimed as a good—the formation of character, the destruction of eccentricity, the repression of individual conscience, the denial of choice.

Here is a boy's description of the process:

"I was a dreamy young fool. My head was stuffed with all sorts of queer fancies, and I expect that if I hadn't come to Lupton I should have turned out an absolute loafer. But I hated it badly that first year. . . . Then, quite suddenly, it all came out bright and clear. . . . One minute I was only a poor little chap that nobody cared for and who didn't matter to anybody, and the next I saw that, in a way, I was as important as the Doctor himself—I was a part of the failure or success of it all. Do you know what I did, sir? I had a book I thought a lot of—Poems and Tales of Edgar Allan Poe. It was my poor sister's book; she had died a year before when she was only seventeen, and she had written my name in it when she was dying—she knew I was fond of reading it. It was just the sort of thing I used to like—morbid fancies and queer poems, and I was always reading it when the fellows would let me alone. But when I saw what life really was, when the meaning of it all came to me, as I said just now, I took that book and tore it to bits, and it was like tearing myself up. But I knew that writing all that stuff hadn't done that American fellow much good, and I didn't see what good I should get by reading it. I couldn't make out to myself that it would fit in with the Doctor's plans or the spirit of the school, or that I should play up at socker any better for knowing all about 'The Fall of the House of Usher' or whatever it's called."

There are many people who would read that and think it a very sound statement of a sensible point of view; for them Mr. Machen does not write. To him nothing is so important as the supernatural; and he is so possessed with the fellowship of the Catholic Church that he is deeply jealous for its dignity, and he finds in the English worship of the old school, of good form, of *esprit de corps*, the worst kind of idolatry. The hero of "The Secret Glory," Ambrose Meyrick, has the mysteries revealed to him. The more positive part of the book is not free from confusion. It is never quite made clear why Meyrick has been guilty of any profanation of the vision of the holy cup, unless it be in his speaking of the vision to his school-fellows. Nor is his love affair with the little servant girl, though it is delicately, even imaginatively handled, made explicable. Here Mr. Machen's book suffers from an inattention to individuality, to personal character. I feel as if he had been mixing the technique of lyric with the technique of the novel, and the result is incoherent and inconsistent. There is no such inconsistency in the story of "The Hill of Dreams." That too is the tale of a misunderstood youth; it too is a mixture of the mystery of satire and the mystery of wonder, but it is a far more complete book than "The Secret Glory." Lucian Taylor is a more satisfactory if more disastrous figure than Ambrose Meyrick; Lucian who "dived deeper and deeper into his books," who took "all obsolescence to be his province" and "in his disgust at the stupid usual questions, 'Will it pay?' 'What good is it?' and so forth, would only read what was uncouth and useless," this Lucian is one of the most successful strange characters of fiction. He really does excite us, as we might be excited by the presence of some one who lived a life of dreams and was haunted by presences unseen by the rest of us. He is

obsessed, if not possessed; and he and his adventures make the people of such stories as Mr. Blackwood's seem thin and their experiences mechanical. Mr. Machen has the great art of omission, of never shouting when a whisper will carry, of never elaborating when a hint will horrify.

The secret Lucian learns is that the world is a sacrament, either of things holy or things obscene; that all life is a sacrifice, and that it matters supremely, matters more than anything, in whose name the sacrifice is made and on whose altar the gift is offered. And thus is there always more hope for those who, by mockery, profane the mysterious than for those who, in dullness, deny them. The man who celebrates the obscene orgies of the Black Mass does, in a terrible way, acknowledge the very validity which he is blaspheming.

II

In his earlier stories Mr. Machen revealed the mystery of horror. In a sense all horror appeals most strongly to youth. We get blunted as we get older, and even Poe does not thrill, except at his best, as he thrilled us in boyhood. Except Poe's stories, I know nothing so terrible as "The Three Impostors." In that book Mr. Machen not only achieves some perfectly new thrills of his own; but he was and is reading among the odd books of the Middle Ages to give to his horror a secular air of ancient awe which indescribably heightens the effect. The effect is strengthened too by the commonplace circumstance of much of the book—the scene in Chandos Street when Headley is found in the mummy case; the terrible beginning when Rose Leicester laughs herself into the story. Rose Leicester is indeed one of the most cheerful "bad women" in fiction. Her brightness, her devilish humour, her recondite mirth make the adventures of Walters even more terrible than the horrors which Mr. Machen so ingeniously contrives.

The debt to Stevenson in form is obvious; but Mr. Machen's fancy is as fertile as Stevenson's, and his fancies have an imaginative background which is lacking from "The New Arabian Nights."

There is at the moment a reaction against what its opponents call "fine writing." No one wishes to defend, except in purely artificial prose such as Beardsley's, the use of deliberately external ornament; but it is easy to say too much in denigration of an ornate style. An ornate style can be perfectly natural—Ruskin's style is as natural and normal as Swift's. Mr. Machen does not indulge in the purple episode. He can write a very muscular, sinewy narrative style when he pleases, as he shows both in "The Great God Pan" and in that excellent parable "The Terror"; but he can also enjoy writing a more elaborate descriptive prose. In his fascinating essay "Hieroglyphics" Mr. Machen claims that great literature, great art, is always distinguished by ecstasy; and he agrees with Mrs. Meynell in denying the title of great artist to Jane Austen, because of her deliberate acceptance of the commonplace, her zest to abide in the ordinary and the seen. Art is, in short, not a substitute for, but a form of, religion; and the artist who does not believe in some pattern in the heavens is no artist at all, but a very skilful craftsman. Realism in the old-fashioned sense of the word is impossible; because nothing that is, is what it seems. The whole universe is a gateway to the unseen world, and every sunrise and sunset shows the pathway of imagination and desire. Mr. Machen's own work illustrates his creed. Even in his lightest things, in such an essay as "The Bowmen," he is true to his faith, and that unfortunate satire, "Dr. Stiggins," can only be excused on the ground that Mr. Machen is in it defending, though mistakenly, what he values more than life.

MORE MAUGHAM.

By GRAHAM SUTTON.

I HAVE been having a busman's holiday. About the time when scribes babble of green fields and write holiday articles, THE BOOKMAN sent me the two last-published plays of Mr. Somerset Maugham,* and it occurred to me that I might profitably re-read the whole collection, by way of comparing these newcomers with the work done by Mr. Maugham before and since.

Mr. Somerset Maugham.

"Cæsar's Wife" is a typical Maugham play, drawn from his favourite class—witty, well-bred folk such as you meet in Wilde and Congreve, used by later melodramatists as mere villain-material, but restored by Mr. Maugham to the light-comedy sphere to which they belong. They are leisured enough to cultivate wit as an art, sure enough of themselves to practise it frankly, witty enough to be "funny without being vulgar" on the riskiest themes. But their frankness is much more than a witty convention; in the women particularly, it is an ingrained quality rising at times to a virtue: a rather terrifying honesty which makes them criticise not even their enemy's case more frankly than their own. It makes Emily break with Freeman in "Smith": it makes Grace Insoley in "Landed Gentry" renounce her new-found love for her husband: in "The Tenth Man" it makes Winter's wife try at the last moment to save him, and begin all her misery anew. And it wrecks some of them, as one of the landed gentry observes: "The fact is, only the wicked should sin. When the virtuous do things they shouldn't, they do make such an awful hash of it."

There is a generic difference between Mr. Maugham's women and his men. They are all fighters; but the women are handicapped by this stubborn honesty, whereas the men have less of it, or do not let it dominate

* "Cæsar's Wife" and "The Land of Promise." 2s. 6d. each. (Heinemann).

them so much. True, the female sex is ever the less prone to self-deception; but these ladies push honesty to an almost Gallic excess. ("I say, Archer, my God, what women!" as R. L. S. once wrote of another dramatist.) The men's strength lies rather in a horse-sense, a firm hold on expediency which is essentially British. They have that quality of doggedness, of blind inability to know when they are beaten, for which the Britisher time out of mind has been both praised and derided. Apart from this (and the salt of wit with which their creator flavours either sex) they are quite ordinary people. And they are often no more than types, whereas his women are always both types and individuals. His men are less clever than Mr. Shaw's, less irrelevantly epigrammatic than Wilde's, less solid than Mr. Galsworthy's. But they all have this quintessential Britishness; they are of the soil, both in their virtues and their limitations.

You might read half a dozen plays of Mr. Maugham without ever suspecting him interested in any class but the cultured, witty society of "Cæsar's Wife." Nevertheless he avoids it successfully quite a number of times: best of all in "The Land of Promise." He had tried his hand before on the "noble savage"—Tom Freeman in "Smith." But Tom Freeman, with all his virtues, was an appalling prig; by the time Mr. Maugham drew Frank Taylor, though he may not have known the type any better, he had at any rate learnt what aspect of it is unstageable. The quiet strong man is a death-trap for dramatists. If the actor be well set up and sturdy enough, you take his strength for granted; but you can't take his quietness for granted if the man keeps on talking. Freeman preached interminably, and was the more intolerable because there was obviously no one else in the cast big enough to punch his head. Taylor says little; but what he does say is so much to the point that he fills the stage without ever transgressing that first postulate of brevity.

And indeed brevity is the soul of Mr. Maugham. His technique is fiercely economical. His plays are shorn of all accessories, so that you feel you could produce a whole cycle of them with no other properties than a pack of cards and a box of expensive cigarettes. Such details as he does admit he treats as a ruthless taskmaster might treat his slaves, making them work double shifts to justify their existence. Thus in "The Land of Promise," the yellow mustard-flower is the outward and visible sign of the blight which means ruin to Taylor's crop; Mrs. Taylor's innocence chooses it for a table ornament; so that it serves also as peg for a piece of genuine pathos. So in "The Circle," if Porteous visits Champion-Cheney in a motor-car, it is because Mrs. Champion-Cheney and Luton will presently need a car to elope in. If the trains behind the hotel in "The Tenth Man" are useful to emphasise the nerviness of every one except the man of iron, they will be useful again for the man of iron to commit suicide under in the last act. Here and there this economy brings its limitations. Two factors are notably absent from his plots, children and lack of money—the two prime difficulties of come-and-go matrimonial re-shuffles such as he depicts. He is not altogether burking the question, however; he draws his characters from a class where it is quite common for neither of these difficulties to arise. No doubt that is one reason why he selects that particular class. Wilde did the same.

Neither "Cæsar's Wife" nor "The Land of Promise" is Mr. Maugham's best play. That honour goes to "The Circle," a later piece contrived deliberately to laugh at the philosophy of some of the previous plays, as Ibsen once laughed at those who took his gospel too seriously. Champion-Cheney's wife intends to elope; Champion-Cheney *père* (who has evidently read his Maugham to some purpose) counsels meek connivance and an appeal to the self-sacrificing trait so strong in previous heroines. The little ruse has everything to commend it—except that at the last moment it does not work. The lovers depart openly: and a few seconds too late old Champion-Cheney comes in rubbing his hands. "A downy old bird!" he vaunts himself to the more enlightened company. "Downy's the word, I think. Downy!" And so the last curtain falls, in richly comic laughter, on what is clearly the light-comedy "Wild Duck" of this dramatist's plays.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

SEPTEMBER, 1922.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II, IV and V are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best quotation from English verse in praise of a holiday on the open road.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

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RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR AUGUST.

I.—The PRIZE for the best original lyric is divided, and HALF A GUINEA each awarded to Dorothy Cook, of Enfield, Cults, Aberdeen, and S. Marguerite Goode, of 4, Royal Mansions, West Croydon, for the following :

TREASURE TROVE.

Ivory and ebony and sandalwood and cedar,
Trophy of the Orient, treasure of the trees,
Peacocks of a thousand eyes, apes grotesquely gambolling,
All in a galley on the hot blue seas.

Emeralds in caskets, and milky pearls a-shimmering,
Silken stuffs in rich array, weapons gold-inlaid,
Spices of a mystic breath, perfume with a strange allure,
Gold-hilted scimitar with keen cold blade.

Vessels from the banquet halls of a monarch's palaces,
Cups that held the poisoned wine that dimmed a king's eye,
Goblets that have played a part in warrior's carousal nights,
Jewelled all, winking to the blank bleached sky.

Eastern robes voluptuous, shimmering and sumptuous,
Fans that stirred a Pharaoh's hair, green and gold and blue,
Precious stuffs in tumbled bales, careless flung, and billowing,
Tropic birds' feathers of a rich rare hue.

Steadily the flying oars gleam and dip and gleam again,
Darkly shine the Moorish backs, bend and pull and strain.
All aloof the cargo lies, bought by blood, and price of death.
Swift speeds the galley, back to old proud Spain.

DOROTHY COOK.

A ROYAL GIVER.

Scarce did I dare the shining stair,
Where Beauty at her threshold stands,
To beg one flower from her fair bower—
When lo ! she gave with both her hands.

She drew me straight within her gate,
Spread Love's own feast of bread and wine,
I kneel'd her raiment's hem to kiss—
She leaned and gave her mouth to mine.

S. MARGUERITE GOODE.

We also select for printing :

IN EXILE.

I have not known the shores of England
In my short span of years.
And yet a longing for that country
Drums like a high voice ever in my ears.
I do not know how this can be—
I only know the thoughts that come to me.

Something there is in me that's bred of England.
Perhaps I stood, a hundred years ago,
And was in peace upon the English downs,
And reckoned nothing else. I do not know.
I only know it seems familiar—fair—
And all my wistful dreams are centred there.

I only know that I am sick for England !
And, if compelled to wait until I die,
My soul will wing out Eastward like a homing dove,
To find its rest beneath an English sky.
Ah—I know this only : when my feet touch English loam—
Out of all my journeying I shall be at home !

(Joseph Andrew Galahad, Portland, Oregon.)

THE LITTLE ROADS.

The little roads wind round about
As though their end were still in doubt,

And, keeping close, the green delight
Of grass is seen to left and right,

The hedges also, high and low,
With them in sweet procession go.

The greater roads are worldly-wise—
They bear important merchandise.

Upon them motors flash and pass—
They've neither time nor room for grass.

The little roads distressful are
Whenever used by motor-car.

It may be they have narrow grown
Through being left so much alone.

But as they stretch contentedly
Their ways are good enough for me.

(Eileen Carfrae, 110b, Brixton Hill, S.W.2.)

We select for special commendation the lyrics by A. T. Oldham (Bolton), Julia Wickham Greenwood (Gibraltar), Beatrice Hillyard (St. Leonards), Winnifred Tasker (Bournemouth), Vera K. Nation (London, W.C.), Isobel Sim (Natal), Cyril G. Taylor (Edinburgh), Enid Blyton (Beckenham), Dorothy Slide (Birmingham), G. Laurence Groom (Regent's Park), Lapidoth Shiggaion (Cape Town), Barbara MacIver (Dingwall), R. Fortescue Doria (Cheltenham), E. Rutter Leatham (Durham), B. M. Wills (Almora, N. India), Agnes B. Scott (Woolwich), James Paton (Pietermaritzburg), Kathleen R. Steel (Hastings), Mollie Harrison (Stourbridge), Mabel W. Phillips (Glendale, California), J. A. Bellchambers (Highgate), Freda Isobel Noble (London, E.), P. B. (Alberta, Canada), Sarah J. Cole (Nottingham), Joan Vale (Moss Vale, N.S.W.), Mary T. James (Barry), J. Patterson (Ontario), Audrie E. M. Wilks (Sheffield), Lilian Holmes (Chichester), Mary Q. Innis (Toronto), Kathleen Ida Noble (Forest Rise), Mabel Greenwood (London, W.), Molly Fogerty (Pretoria), Dorothy Hope (Southwold), Constance Nudd (Yiewsley), Fred S. Best (King's Lynn), Nancy Pollok (Glasgow), Sadie C. Clay (Tingley), Francis Bexfield (Hove), James Willoughby (Tooting), Frank H. Jellicoe (London, S.W.), Richard Murphy (Birkenhead), Annie G. Piggot (Bihar, India), Kathleen Kevin (Belfast), Cinda (Scarborough), Phyllis Erica Noble (London, E.).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to C. E. Lummis, of 2, Upland Road, Guernsey, Channel Islands, for the following :

A LEGAL ADVISER. (Title of article.)

"A man he was to all the country *dear*."
GOLDSMITH, *The Deserted Village*.

We also select for printing :

ROVERING TO SUCCESS.
BY SIR ROBERT BADEN-POWELL. (Herbert Jenkins.)

"You must stir it and stump it,
And blow your own trumpet,
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance !"
W. S. GILBERT, *Ruddigore*.

(Ethel Mulvany, 21, Drury Street, Dublin.)

THE HIGH-BROWS. BY C. E. M. JOAD.
(Jonathan Cape.)

"I am an intellectual sort of chap,
And think of things that would astonish you."
W. S. GILBERT, *Iolanthe*.

(R. D. Charlton, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia.)

III.—Owing to the delay occasioned by the printers' strike the August BOOKMAN was not published until too late for Competitors to send in for this Competition as, unlike the other Competitions, the subject of this is changed every month. We are repeating in this Number the same subject as was announced in our last.

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to B. Noël Saxelby, of St. Catherine's, Hardwick Mount, Buxton, for the following:

MEMOIRS OF THE CROWN PRINCE OF GERMANY.

(Thornton Butterworth.)

In this "apologia pro vita sua" the Ex-Crown Prince represents himself as a well-meaning, much misjudged man. Of his exile he writes with natural but not excessive bitterness and his sketch of the Kaiser's character, if not particularly filial, is worth reading. But always he returns to the events of those fateful November days, seeking to justify his own actions and place all blame elsewhere. This self-justification is overdone, and gives an effect of insincerity: one feels that, if a more clear-sighted man than his father, the Prince is also a more dangerous one.

We also select for printing:

THIS FREEDOM. By A. S. M. HUTCHINSON. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

This fine book shows the wreckage of a family through the determination of a clever woman to keep on her business career after marriage. It is a study of the vital influence of early environment. Rosalie's first home—male-ridden—made her hard and self-sufficing; but the governess-upbringing she decreed for her own children absolutely ruined them. She refused to admit any differences in the conditions and objects of life for men and women, and not till her whole home had been desolated did she realise, bitterly, the freedom and happiness waiting for a home-claimed woman.

(Joyce McGown Clark, The Kieve, Sunninghill, Berks.)

RICHARD MIDDLETON. By HENRY SAVAGE. (Cecil Palmer.)

This life of Middleton, written by a brother poet, achieves the ideal of biography in that it gives a clear picture of the man and of the circumstances, both physical and mental, which brought him to his tragic death. Mr. Savage omits nothing essential to his theme, revealing his friend's virtues and defects with equal honesty. Numerous quotations are given from published and unpublished writings. Those who already know the works of Middleton will value this volume for its revelation of a fine though not entirely admirable character. Those who do not will find it an interesting introduction to them.

(Geoffrey H. Wells, 14, Essich Street, Roath Park, Cardiff.)

CAPTIVITY. By M. L. EYLES. (Heinemann.)

This is a book teeming with interest, burning with vitality and inspiration which sweep one along through the pages, sometimes exquisitely beautiful, sometimes equally brutal, of Marcella's life. "Captivity" provides fascinating psychological studies, but the author is too much an artist to allow the merely scientific element in her work to come first. One feels that through her sincerity and experience of life she has given us what can be called a fine novel.

(G. W. Bowes, Sherwood, Rishton, near Blackburn.)

AT SOME OF THE TABLES NEAR BY THE FUN WAS NOW FURIOUS.

From "The House of Mohun," by George Gibbs, which was published last month by Messrs. Appleton.

LOVE AND FREINDSHIP. By JANE AUSTEN. (Chatto & Windus.)

Two delicious little romances, "Love and Freindship" and the unfinished "Lesley Castle," are undoubtedly the cream of the great novelist's juvenilia. Both in their girlish exuberant fashion anticipate the clever satire of "Northanger Abbey." In both, too, Miss Austen pokes fun at the favourite type of romance of the period, with its ridiculously high-flown views of love, marriage and friendship, glorification of filial disobedience, and ethereal heroines who were over-fond of fainting-fits. The little "History of England," though omitting much that every schoolboy knows nowadays, is a piquant summary and makes amusing reading.

(Winifred M. Davies, 148, King Street, Brynmawr, Breconshire.)

We select for special commendation the reviews by J. Cuthbert Scott (Cheltenham), D. V. Staines (Merton Park), James A. Richards (Tenby), Lilian M. Bridges (Salisbury), A. Eleanor Pinnington (Exeter), Maude R. Fleeson (Manchester), M. Bowden (Stowmarket), Nita C. M. Gayford (London, S.W.), George Warren (Derby), E. G. Martin (Leeds), B. D. H. (Coventry), Alice Wills (Glasgow), Janet D. Morton (Hastings).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to Colonel G. R. Townshend, 5, Terminus Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea.

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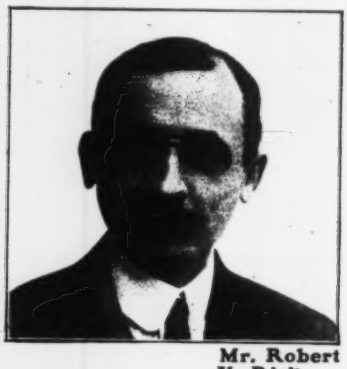
HOW A LYRIC IS WRITTEN.

By Robert K. Risk.

THIS is not intended as a "How To" article, for which there is a prodigious and sustained demand among readers of many popular journals. If a few notes on how a lyric is written should help anyone to write a lyric, I ask for no thanks from any literary aspirant; nor will I accept the blame of any editor, already overstocked with poems.



Mr. Robert K. Risk.

There is a widespread delusion among people who do not live by, or practise any of the arts, that writers, and especially poets, wait upon what is called inspiration; that unless the Divine Muse touches their lips frequently, they will only very infrequently produce anything worth putting upon paper. The reverse of this is the truth. There may be exceptions, but in the main, writing men and women depend far more on application than on inspiration. They can produce something every day of the year, except when they are fagged and need a rest. Their work maintains an average of quality. On some days, and on some series of days, they will write more easily than on others, and what they write on these fortunate days may call for less labour with the file and the burnisher. That, I think, is the modicum of fact upon which the fantasy of inspiration is insecurely founded.

The apparent ease of the fine lyric confirms the delusion of special inspiration. If you just run over in your mind Herrick's "Gather Ye Rosebuds While Ye May," or Lovelace's "Tell me not, Sweet, I am Unkind," these lyrics may seem to support the theory that they were written with a running pen, which never paused to delete or improve anything in the original draft. But I believe that Herrick spent several days over his sixteen lines of "Counsel to Girls." I fancy that Colonel Lovelace chewed the tops off a number of pens, before he was satisfied with "To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars." Only one thing in the latter poem gives it the appearance of having been dashed off—that the military gentleman carelessly rings the changes on "thou" and "you" in a highly reprehensible manner. A habit of the times, but in my private mind I always say, "As *thou*, too, *shalt* adore."

I once asked a professor of English literature, who is also a poet, how many short poems which have lived into a second century or more, were "dashed off." He thought that perhaps one in a hundred thousand might have come to instant perfection at the end of a pen. He also was of opinion that if a man spent three weeks on a very short poem he might produce something worth writing. This reminded me of what Oscar Wilde described as a hard day at his desk. "In the forenoon," he said, "I removed a semi-colon from the end of a line. In the afternoon I put it back again." A humorously extravagant statement, no doubt: but one with underlying truth in it.

A lyric may begin with a mere idea floating, nebulous, in one's mind; or the idea may crystallise itself into a few words; quite often into a complete line: and that line may dictate the manner and tone of the whole poem. A great many lyrics have been written to a woman. Often the qualities of the woman who suggests the lyric may settle its form, apart from its matter, which is built up gradually later. A writer instinctively chooses, or rather, his subconscious self thrusts into his mind, a form of metre and rhythm suitable to his subject. Perhaps the best example of this agreement of subject with metre is Rossetti's poem to Jenny:

> "Lazy, laughing, languid Jenny,
> Fond of a kiss and fond of a guinea. . . ."

A perfectly apt metre in which to write about a light woman: and you may contrast it with the dignity of "The Blessed Damozel."

A great many lyrics arise out of the meetings and partings of men and women. Let us suppose that a man is looking forward eagerly to the rare presence in London of a woman whom he admires; not a creature of fluff and furbelows, or the modern equivalent of furbelows, for whom he has a passion, but a comely woman with a brain, and a heart, and a character which guides and controls both. Well, as he turns over in his mind the pleasure of seeing her again, in London in the spring, his mind will naturally and inevitably, if it throws him a line of verse ready made, throw him one that is dignified and sonorous. rather than one that is tripping and jaunty. It may, for example, be a complimentary appeal to the lady to:

> "Reburnish for the world the emeralds of Spring."

He is, we will suppose, rather taken by that conceit. He decides that he will keep that line for the close of his lyric. The line comes back to him at odd times for a few days, and at odd moments—perhaps when he is at lunch, or filling up an Income Tax form. Then one evening, as he is walking along the Embankment, another line thrusts itself into his mind:

> "Thames, mirroring your face, now loiters to the sea."

He permits himself to observe that that is "a fine line," and that the Elizabethans never did anything better. So, having two lines that he is considerably well pleased with, that night he sets about getting his lyric on to paper. His affection for the Cavalier Poets tempts him to steal a name from Colonel Lovelace for his lady. So he heads his draft:

> "To Lucasta, Visiting London in Springtime."

Then, without any conscious thought on his part, he writes the first three lines:

> "Now, when the tide of Life swells to its flood,
> You flash on London's springtide loveliness,
> Yourself more bright than April, gay and wise . . ."

"Gay and wise," he says, pleased with himself. "That's her, exactly." Then he is pulled up by the choice of rhymes with flood. The first one he thinks of happens to give him a line at once:

"A gracious woman, in whom the fragrant blood
Of kings long in the dust leaps to express
The confident kindness of your gentle eyes."

The author likes these three lines as he writes them down; but he is not sure that his adjectives will pass a second reading. "Gracious" he dismisses as commonplace. "Fragrant" is too precious, with a touch of Crashaw about it. So he works the idea of "Kings long in the dust" back into the previous line, and gets rid of the banality of "confident kindness" and "gentle eyes." Thus the lines may run now:

"A royal woman, in whom the ancient blood
Of kings long in the dust leaps to express
The innocent kindness of your virgin eyes."

He is so pleased with that last line, with its truth to the fact that a woman's eyes almost always reveal her character, that he goes through the next stanza at a handgallop:

"Our London holds you for a little space,
And London's glamour grows more magical;
Our city of loveliness and mystery
Submits herself your lover: a new grace
Informs her, while for Pan's high festival
Love brims the Earth, resurgent as the eternal sea."

On reading this over, he sees that "glamour" won't do at any price. It is a stale, tired, journalistic word. So he changes that line to:

"And wizard London gleams more magical,"

"gleams" being a more vivid word than "grows." Then he changes "gleams" to "dawns," and pats himself on the back over that. "Gleams" is a beautiful word, he reflects, but "dawns" is more suggestive. London is most magical in the dawn; and her wizardry at dawn is deepened, because Lucasta, being in London, whitens and etherealises, with her own light, the coming of each new day. So he dashes into his third and last stanza:

"Tarry awhile with us: London has need
Of goodness as of beauty; while you stay
The saddest heart must lift itself to sing;
Turn to a rose in bloom each poison-weed;
Teach women to be chaste, and men to pray;
Interpret to the world the miracle of Spring."

"Not half bad" is his verdict on the finished work. If you are polite enough to agree with him, I take the liberty of pointing out that I think he could rewrite that lyric in quite a number of different ways, so that the same ideas would be clothed in wholly other words, very possibly to the improvement of the poem as a whole. In proof of that contention, I may point out a curious thing which you may not have noticed. The line in which the poem originated does not appear in it at all. That was:

"Reburnish for the world the emeralds of Spring . . ."

Neither does the line which, on the Embankment, persuaded him that the Elizabethans never did anything better. That was:

"Thames, mirroring your face, now loiters to the sea . . ."

So you see how very difficult it is to know when you have reached finality in writing a lyric; and when you think you have reached it, what you thought were your best lines may become surplus stock—which may always be saved up for another poem!

New Books.

A CONTENTED EDUCATIONIST.*

Plutarch's "Lives" has so completely overshadowed his other works, generally grouped together under the title of "Moralia," that it is not always realised that he is responsible for what is not far from being a system of education. The ordinary reader of his essays may be pardoned for not noticing this fact, for his treatment is vague and incidental rather than systematic; but after reading Miss Westaway's scholarly book one must rank Plutarch among the educationists, even though he has the exceptional quality of not being dissatisfied as are most of his tribe. So pleased is he with himself that there have been found people who go the length of calling him conceited. Miss Westaway does not deny the charge, but proceeds to explain the circumstances of the case, and so persuasive is she that she carries us with her and makes us actually like this self-satisfied philosopher. He lived, she tells us, at a time and in a place where things went very well. In the first century A.D. the more central of the Roman Provinces led a life of profound peace and contentment. Plutarch was well pleased with things as they were. The people of his world fell comfortably into two groups—a fortunate minority who needed education, and a majority who did not. What could be pleasanter for professional educators? They knew where they were in those days; they had none of our troublesome problems of mass education. No wonder Plutarch was satisfied. He lived in one of the quiet beats in the rhythm of history. For Miss Westaway has complete faith in the alternation of periods of content and dissatisfaction. We happen ourselves to live in a dissatisfaction beat; but our successors will have better luck. Many of us cannot share this optimism. We see in the introduction of the power-machine a new element that is going to disturb the pleasant alternation. But we hope Miss Westaway may be right. In any case she explains that Plutarch's two main educational principles are really better suited for our time of discontent than for his own time of placidity. His first principle, the need for self-knowledge, is always urgent, but in these days of stress it is particularly so. His second principle, moderation in all things, was rather superfluous in his own genial time, but in the storm and stress of to-day it cannot be too widely proclaimed.

Miss Westaway's theory of cyclic repetitions is curiously paralleled in the history of Plutarch's reputation. It appears to have had regular rises and falls. Now he is well known and highly appreciated, again he falls into obscurity and is neglected. Foretelling the future in terms of the past, Emerson tells us that "Plutarch will be perpetually rediscovered as long as books last." The book we are considering is one of these rediscoveries and is an exceptionally illuminating and charming one. We are made to realise what manner of man Plutarch was:

* "The Educational Theory of Plutarch." By K. M. Westaway. 7s. 6d. (University of London Press.)

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full of wise saws and not too modern instances. The subjectivity of his teaching is brilliantly brought out. For though Miss Westaway is less happy than elsewhere in her formal exposition of the Plutarchian psychology, she shows amazing insight into the working of the man's own mind. She brings into the light the peculiarly adult aspect of his educational system. He was a professor rather than a teacher and would have been of little use among children, since he was in Miss Westaway's words "terribly grown up." His strong point was the minor morals, and on this point Miss Westaway writes delightfully and carries conviction.

She will have many Greekless readers, so it is perhaps a pity that she has not given translations of her quotations. But one can understand the impatience of the scholar at having to render every little passage into English. Besides, the kernel of this valuable work is available even to those who do not know the Greek characters.

JOHN ADAMS.

THE SWEET MIRACLE.*

Four years ago, during a visit to London, the writer was taken to the Peasant Shop in Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury, a house that offered none but honest wares of craftsmanship in a period of shoddy now difficult to believe in, blessed as we have been ever since with post-war sincerities. But the most memorable purchase he was able to make that morning was not a customary exhibit at the shop, honest and sincere though it was, like everything else, as we shall see. A young Jewish woman was offering for sale two small shilling brochures, vilely printed on very bad paper, with their uncomely yellow covers thus inscribed:

"YOUTH. By Isaac Rosenberg. London, I. Narodiczky, Printer, 48 Mile End Road, E. 1915."

"MOSES. A Play. By I. Rosenberg. London, Printed by the Paragon Printing Works, 8 Ocean Street, Stepney Green, E. 1916."

The two books did not appear to be in great demand that morning. The girl who was offering them was the sister of the poet himself, who had been dead three months. To-day those little volumes are not to be had for a dozen times their published price, so that readers who have heard of Rosenberg and his poetry without being able to form their closer acquaintance will be glad of the collection now made by his friend and fellow-poet, Mr. Gordon Bottomley.

Isaac Rosenberg was killed in action on the first of April, 1918. Mr. Laurence Binyon tells of this in his introduction to the present volume, and in his statement is all that unemotional matter-of-factness which has come to be regarded as an admirable trait in biographical essays of the kind. He also tells us, a little later and just as perfunctorily, that not more than a year before Rosenberg joined the army he had sailed to the Cape in search of a warmer climate, as it was thought that his lungs were affected. True, Mr. Binyon points out that "no one could have been less fitted for a military life. He suffered not only from physical disability, bad health and sensitiveness, but from the absent-mindedness of one whose imagination was possessed by his poetic schemes." But if the bare truth aroused in Mr. Binyon anything like the savage indignation which his recital of it must stir in the reader, he has concealed it admirably behind these curt sentences. Certainly he has uttered no word of condemnation for the people who drove such a lad to the war, or for those who permitted him to remain there.

The pity of it all! In the poems that have come to us there is enough and more than enough to convince even those who are inclined to discount a good deal in a young poet because of his harshnesses and crudities of expression that Isaac Rosenberg was on the threshold of high achievement especially as an interpreter of his own national literature. In his early poems that form a goodly section of the volume, the thoroughness, as he himself once said of the Japanese paintings exhibited at Shepherd's Bush, is astounding. "No slipshod, tricky slickness, trusting to chance effects, but a subtle suggestiveness and accident that is the consequence of intention." One piece, entitled "Sleep," contains an image whose vastness is seldom to be matched in modern English poetry:

> "O subtle gods lying hidden!
> O gods with your oblique eyes!
> Your elbows in the dawn, and wrists
> Bright with the afternoon."

The later verses, "From Camp and Trench," reveal a sureness and comparative polish that make such examples as "The Dead Heroes" a contribution to the mature art of our epoch. But the editor has been wise in placing at the commencement and in greatest prominence the poetic play entitled "Moses" which, unequal though it is, must be regarded as a valid interpretation of the legend in true lineage with the Old Testament version itself. The volume as a whole is well; and it will remain as a final memorial of another of England's young poets whom the gods loved all the more because England herself held them too cheaply.

About Mr. Force Stead's volume there need be no regrets. There is certainly no cause for an introduction. The poet who sings about "Sylvia who died in Spring" in such a tender key may not have the solidity of Rosenberg; but there is none of his dourness:

> "A week since, and I saw her smile
> In sunshine by the meadow-stile;
> A day since, and the lilies gave
> Faint light and fragrance from her grave:
> And now, with dawn above them spread,
> She and the lilies both are dead."

In pronouncing that as a most exquisite little epitaph there is no desire to emphasise its importance at the expense of the rest of Mr. Stead's volume. Half a dozen of his other lyrics are equally successful. In a "Prelude in April" we have a picture of the "sunset-brightened lea" as reflected in meadow pools; an inverted country-side with "downward-plunging spire," and

> "just above a cloud there browse
> A dozen topsy-turvy cows."

If Mr. Stead has a technical fault worth noting it is that of his too frequent use of the hyphen, as in "claret-coloured," "harrow-combed" and "trimly-furrowed" in successive lines—evidently it has become a habit, for at least one of these phrases did not need to be hyphenated at all. Nor are his most considerable pieces free from the same feature, though they are good enough to surmount its effects. "The Sweet Miracle" and "The Sea Captain" are too widely contrasted narratives, the first named being based on a prose story by Eca de Quieroz, a Portuguese writer of a century ago, and the other on a personal experience—all the more telling because of its economy of phrasing and sparseness of content. It is a tribute to the poet's versatility that we admire his stubborn old mariner at a seaport boarding-house in the same proportion as we revere the central figure in his "Sweet Miracle," the undying tale of old Palestine retold with a beauty and sense of atmosphere that will brighten many dull eyes and refresh tired hearts—if we may make free use of the final line in a lovely passage from the poem itself. Mr. Stead is to be congratulated; if all the poetry that came out of Oxford—his Alma Mater—held as much genuine promise as his, there might be many more people ready to believe intelligently in the "sweet miracle" of poetry itself.

THOMAS MOULT.

* "The Sweet Miracle, and other Poems." By William Force Stead. 6s. (Cobden-Sanderson.)—"Poems." By Isaac Rosenberg. 6s. (Heinemann.)

TWO OF THE JURY ON "THE JUDGE."*

(1) For what seems a long time we have looked forward to reading Miss Rebecca West's new novel. "The Return of the Soldier," in spite of a certain unreality, was an arresting book. We felt justified in expecting that this young writer would produce, as her gift ripened, finer and finer work; that her books would presently take a high place in our literature. At any moment, from the author who has given evidence of big gift, may come the long expected marvel of art; and therefore when we open a new book from such a writer as Miss West it is with a thrilled expectancy.

For this particular novel we need not have been kept waiting so long, seeing that it consists of two books either of which could have been issued to us without the other. The first is very well in its way, that is to say it is an advance on "The Return of the Soldier"; but the inclusion of it between the same covers as the other more mature book shows us either that Miss West is unable to criticise her own work or that she has not yet a sound sense of form. The second book is complete in itself, and Ellen could have been brought into it as Richard's prospective bride, without that long, interesting study of Edinburgh and Edinburgh life, of which the first mainly consists. In fact Book I could, without detriment to Book II—nay, with positive advantage—have been scrapped. Not only is it largely irrelevant, but it is too full of similes, so full that it is difficult to disentangle from them the thread of story.

It is suggestive, too, in its digressions from the main theme, of the Clayhanger school—for instance the death of Darius could be compared with that of Ellen's mother. In other words, like the beginnings of a flow, this first book is turgid and bubbly. We do not get the clear, dark wine till we come to Book II.

The difference between the books—considered as art—is almost as great as that between the uncut and the facetted gem. In Book II we find—having struggled through Book I—what we have been expecting from Miss West, a book which has come from the depths which underlie our surface selves, from the reality which, if there be a future life, will go on. It is concerned with two people, Richard Yaverland and his mother, Marion; and they, like most of us, manage to make a tragic muddle of their lives. It is written passionately, with a splendid deep glow, like that of the furnace fires you see in an iron-works. Out of those fires come the round masses of flaming metal, molten for the shaping, and it is the same with the words, liquid yet of steel, which give us "The Judge." Marion Yaverland is the daughter of a farmer, and her lover was the squire—Sir Harry. To make her child legitimate she consented to a formal marriage with Peacey. Her trust was betrayed by this man and she had another son, a misbegotten odd-come-short, whom she was unable to love, but who, unfortunately for himself, could not but love his wonderful mother. Sir Harry, to the hurt of her soul, cries to her, "You are unique!" and it was that she was the ideal woman, lover and mother, which brought on her all her troubles.

Did I say the book concerns two people? I was mistaken. It concerns one only—Marion Yaverland; the others, though truly conceived and richly given, are shadowy compared with her. It is she who from first to last holds our attention. No wonder Richard cannot think of Ellen when his mother is present; no one could. It makes Marion feel she is in the way of his making a successful marriage. She bulks too largely in his life, prevents him from even tolerating his brother. Therefore she will remove herself, and she does. And his mother's death causes Richard to kill his puling brother:

"Let's put an end to this," he said.
He drove the knife into Roger's heart.
"Mummie!" breathed Roger. Meekly, but with no sign that he had any quarrel with the proceedings save that they were peremptory, he sank down on the chair beside him and fell forward, his head lying among the tea-cups. This no doubt was the disorder that Marion had always foreseen; to prevent which she had practised her insane tidiness.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Miss Rebecca West.**

No extra word there, no spoiling touch—sheer beauty. And Book II is like that throughout—a deep, glowing thing with the lights of a ruby and the fire of molten iron.

C. A. DAWSON SCOTT.

(2) Miss Rebecca West took a long time to write her latest novel, "The Judge"; and as one result of this, the second portion of an immensely long book is entirely different in calibre and characterisation from the first. It is as if Miss West had planned a great tragic romance, and had been overtaken midway in her journey by Freud and Jung, with all their grotesque perversities in the dissection of normal human motives. She gives us such a gallant, clean little heroine in Ellen Melville, with her intrepid youth and ignorance, her charm, courage and cuteness, that we resent bitterly Ellen's supersession by her lover's terrible mother, Marion Yaverland, one of the most intolerable women—nay, easily the most intolerable—in modern fiction. The worst of the matter is that Miss West is obviously much more interested in Marion than in Ellen.

The jealous, amative relationship between Richard Yaverland and his mother is something sinister and foreboding. There is a slow poison in it, as detestable as the motto of the book: "Every mother is a judge who sentences her children for the sins of the father." The dictum sounds clever, but it is absolutely and entirely untrue. Every woman in the world is a counsel for the defence for her offspring, whatever their heritage.

It is surprising that so modern a writer as Miss West should introduce the old novelette incident of a seduction by the village squire. It is revolting that she should describe in such terms of cold lust Marion's enforced marriage with the Littimer-like butler. There are many obstetric passages in the book also which have no concern in the world with literature.

The only escape is from the novel's second section to its first. Ellen at the office, typewriting diligently for an Edinburgh solicitor and his son. Ellen at home exchanging views on life with her quiet little mother. Ellen selling *Votes for Women* to sneering girls in the street. These things are simple and lovely and worthy of Barrie at the height of his powers as fictionist. Ellen, alas, is the only

* "The Judge." By Rebecca West. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

chaste and humorous thing in a murky and morbid volume. Richard Yaverland, pictured as a dark, resolute gentleman adventurer, the type that might occasionally wear gold ear-rings, has no real substance. He never grips the imagination. His brother Roger, the imbecile, whom his mother secretly loathes, is on the other hand real enough, but pathetically repulsive.

The moment Ellen steps into Marion's house as the fiancée of her son she practically ceases to exist. All the blood has gone out of her, and she is a pallid lay figure. The greedy, self-indulgent and possessive Marion dominates not only the household, but the whole landscape. Miss West's scenery is terrific with a malign beauty. One gets weary as well as sick of Marion. This squat, insolent woman, with her sentimental broodings over her betrayal by the squire and his neglect of her and death, is rather a subject for a madhouse than a leading character in what ought to have been a great novel. I beseech Miss West to drop psycho-analysis and its slimy exponents and devote her fine talents to clean, creative fiction.

LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

TWO CRITICS.*

Mr. Middleton Murry's volume is not only the best thing he has done, it is one of the best things anyone has done recently in the way of criticism. He seems to have found himself definitely and to be writing with the quiet authority that comes from mastery of technique. I hope he will live up to the best of the book, and resolve to abstain from the occasional journalistic startlers (I had almost said "howlers") in which he has allowed himself to indulge. Even lately he has shown signs of unrepentance—I noticed, for instance, a column of absurdly excessive enthusiasm about a writer who has produced one slim volume of angular and questionable criticism. No man, not even Mr. Middleton Murry, can afford to halve himself in this way—to write uncritical criticism in columns and then expect esteem for critical criticism in pages. The present volume is the real stuff; it is criticism of the centre; it could be translated into French and offered to Continental readers as a specimen of what England can still do in a great art.

Mr. Murry tells us that underlying all his essays is "a theory of the psychology of literary creation," and he ends the volume with a "critical credo." I am not sure that he has made out his case, and I am not sure whether his case is worth making. I will quote against him a sentence of his own on Flaubert; of whom he says that his theory "had little influence on his practice, and was rather (as most theories are) a justification of an accomplished fact." The theories of artists are always interesting, but there may be no more truth in them than in an affidavit. Wagner wrote interminable volumes to prove that the music he could write was the only music worth writing; Wordsworth had theories about poetical composition; but we do not judge their works by the worth of their theories. The critic is an artist—a second-hand artist, if you like; the first-hand artist is inspired by life, the second-hand artist is inspired by literature; still, it is something to be an artist, even at one remove. Like other artists, the critic must have the quality Bagehot attributed specially to Shakespeare—the experiencing nature. He must be continually experiencing and expressing, if he is to fulfil himself. His theories may be interesting (like "Laocoon") as part of æsthetics; but he will endure as a writer by his power to transmit both personality and experience.

What is the matter with so much of contemporary criticism is that it has little trace of the experiencing nature. A dozen years ago a brilliant young man wrote a brilliant critical article. We expected great things of him. He was engaged for regular contributions in a critical weekly. For twelve years he has been writing precisely the same critical article—only rather less brilliantly each week. He has not developed; he never will develop; he lacks the experiencing nature. Of course we are not speaking of a particular case; but open a collection of the weeklies and read the articles of the regular contributors. You will find plenty of heads to fit the cap. Mr. Middleton Murry in the present volume definitely shows that he has the experiencing nature and the power to express it. We look to him for even better things. I do not propose to discuss the book in detail, I simply recommend it cordially as a thoroughly enjoyable volume that is at the same time an addition to English letters. I will ask him (as a foot-note) whether his remarks on the critics of "Coriolanus" haven't failed to take account of Dr. A. C. Bradley's admirable lecture.

Mr. Garnett's "Friday Nights" is not the same sort of book. It is a collection of his "Parerga and Paralipomena," and, as he explains in the preface, the essays represent the week-end recreations of a publisher's reader. One of them goes back to 1898, several go back to 1899 and one comes down to 1921. The range of time offers us a curious spectacle. We are in at the birth of Joseph Conrad and Stephen Crane. Ibsen is still in the defensible stage, and Nietzsche comparatively new. The volume is thus unusually piquant and stimulating. Here and there we feel that Mr. Garnett gets away from the main stream of letters and tends to overpraise merely minor tributaries; but the book is a sound and satisfying work which bookmen will read with enjoyment.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

* "Countries of the Mind: Essays in Literary Criticism." By J. Middleton Murry. 10s. 6d. (Collins.)—"Friday Nights: Literary Criticisms and Appreciations." By Edward Garnett. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

WHISTLER AS MASTER-ETCHER.*

This latest "Studio" extra, under the editorship of Mr. Geoffrey Holme, will be welcomed by every student and collector of the works of the greatest master of etching, Rembrandt van Rhyn only excepted, not only for its essential beauty but also for its illuminating introduction by Mr. Campbell Dodgson, Keeper of the Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. A critic of unrivalled knowledge, opportunity and taste, he was once told by a German etcher in a burst of enthusiasm that he had "*ein graphisches Hertz*," and all who have, either as members of the public seeking his official advice, or as readers of the *Print Collectors' Quarterly*, or as hearers of his lectures, had the privilege of sitting at his feet, will heartily endorse what Mr. Dodgson whimsically says "sounds like a disease but was meant as a compliment." For Mr. Dodgson is the true virtuoso, endowed with an extra eye for what is fine in art. We count both Whistler and ourselves fortunate in having him as herald of these matchless lyrics in black and white.

For that is the impression left on the mind as we reluctantly tear ourselves away from this beautiful volume with its ninety-six fine reproductions of the master's etchings. Here is no epic artist recording with his etching needle memorials of the past, by his genius embodying in them the very spirit of history. Here rather is a singer using nature as an instrument by which he may express his own emotions, his own enthusiasms. Consider for a moment how significant of this detachment is his attitude towards architecture. So unconcerned is he with topographical correctness that he does not even trouble to reverse his subject on the plate! Such things he leaves to the inspired Meryon (whom by the way Whistler did not consider inspired at all), or Piranesi. What concerns him is that *through these things* he shall express *himself*. Whether he could, an he would, have emulated the great Frenchman in his own genre may be questioned when we examine his impatient "Isle de la Cité, Paris." On the other hand, when we look at the architectural portion of "Billingsgate," we are forced to think twice about it. "I can do the big bow-wow with anyone," said Thackeray

* "The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler." By Campbell Dodgson, C.B.E. 42s. (Studio Limited, London.)

when writing of Charlotte Brontë (I write from memory, not having my books about me), "but how this little lady manages to make interesting the details of ordinary life is beyond my comprehension." So it was with Whistler. Sent out to Italy by the Fine Arts Society in 1880 to do twelve etchings of Venice, he shocked the world of critics by bringing home studies of little back canals, obscure courts and doorways, and haunts of the humblest kind of gondoliers' families and Venetian bead-stringers, in place of the expected realistic and regulation pictures of the Rialto, the Bridge of Sighs, St. Mark's, and the Doge's Palace. "Even so," says Mr. Dodgson, "it is difficult for us of to-day, trained to admire the etchings of Venice as some of the most exquisite creations of art, to put ourselves in the position of men who could deride 'The Palaces,' 'The Mart,' 'The Riva' No. 1 and 'The Praghetto No. 2.'" But so it was. They only understood the big bow-wow. They had no glimpse of the cardinal fact that this was the first round in a great fight for liberty, the liberty to use etching as a method of self-expression, to use it slightly, selectively, sketchily, with an asceticism which never permitted liberty to be an occasion to the flesh. For, as Mr. Dodgson points out, Whistler "had an unusually sane and candid self-criticism." Certainly in his writing he was not so austere, but that is another story altogether.

There is no room here to follow out one tithe of such trains of thought as are started by Mr. Dodgson's pregnant letterpress. How admirably for example he sums up the beauty and meaning of that early dry-point, "Finette," with its full burr, rich as mezzotint, sensitive of the period to which the dancer-model belonged, "Finette" who "resumes and typifies an epoch that has absolutely passed away," and then, with it as his text, emphasises the all-important fact that beauty does not lie in the subject but in the artist, not in finish but in selection. Indeed, how admirably and how seemingly easily the whole difficult task is accomplished of giving in the space of twenty-one pages such a purview of the man's etched work as to convince even those who may have been prejudiced against Whistler by much excessive and injudicious praise, that that opinion is right which places him in the unchallenged position of the greatest of modern etchers. From the beginning, it seems clear as we look back, his genius was bound to assert itself. It was, says Mr. Dodgson,

> "The old story of truant genius inappropriately seated on an office stool . . . with variations suited to the case and, like Robert Martineau in the lawyer's office making sketches of brides and bridesmaids on marriage contracts, we find Whistler doing the first genuine Whistler etchings, and very good ones too, in the shape of little heads that intrude on the blank spaces of the copper above and around two very neatly engraved portions of the coast of the United States."

For Whistler was "an artist by the grace of God," an etcher by mercy of his appointment to the Geodetic Survey at Washington, a successful craftsman by virtue of his own earnestness, industry and determination.

G. S. LAYARD.

THE FOSTER MOTHER.*

The scent of warm, newly-ploughed earth, the whispering of grey-green willows, sun suddenly shining out of a thick grey and white sky, larks singing in watery furrows, sunshine again, and then . . . a black, deep pond with bubbles rising to the surface . . . and a lump in one's throat—that is what one remembers after reading Ernest Pérochon's "Foster Mother," or "Nene" as it is called in the original French.

It is a simple story, simply and beautifully told, the story of a peasant girl who "mothers" the two children of Michel Corbier, a young farmer, whose dead wife had been all in all to him, and who employs Madeline Clarandeau to look after his house and children. She comes, a rather timid, work-drugged, slightly downtrodden, but good and capable creature, and her heart is stirred by the neglected little ones, and from her entry into the household everything is changed. The house is well kept; all the starved love in her heart is allowed to blossom, and is lavished on the two motherless mites who call her "Nene," a contraction of her name, meaning also "foster-mother."

She spends her wages on the children, her old mother is partially dependent on her, she has a worthless brother, yet she is happy and contented so long as she has the children's love . . . until the advent of the other woman. Everything is peaceful, one gets the fragrance of the hay-field, hears the swish of the water on the red-brick floor of the kitchen as Madeline scrubs, the scent of newly-baked bread mingles with the odour of the wash-tub, one sees spotless linen flapping on the line. The children laugh, and though Madeline is fit to drop with fatigue sometimes, the love of Lalie and Jo drives away weariness. Then—faugh! some artificial perfume . . . eau-de-Cologne in a farm-house kitchen, as Violette trips across the scene.

Madeline is a daughter of the warm, red earth, affectionate, dutiful, a little slow perhaps, but with splendid devotion willing to make any sacrifice for the motherless little ones. Violette, the light woman, is steeped to her finger-tips in artifice, she is cheap and vulgar, but she understands one side of men, and the stupid but honest farmer-peasant Corbier falls a victim to her wiles. Finally he installs her as mistress of the home and mother to his children.

Here is the tragedy of the story. The children Madeline has mothered, slaved for, lived for, almost died for, do not want her any longer. Violette has seen to that. With the petty spite of the woman of her type, she has set the children against her, and when she returns to see them they have forgotten her.

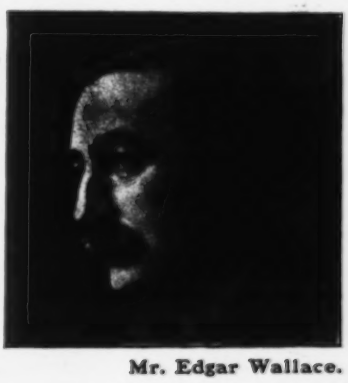
The book forms one of the volumes in "Les Fleurs de France" library, admirably translated by Mrs. Alys Eyre Macklin, and it says much for the exquisite style that one reads it with joy over its diction, wholly forgetting it is a translation. It abounds with beautiful lines and phrases, with interesting superstitions of French peasant folk; quaint country customs are related and the whole book has that sincerity yet simplicity of diction which is the hall-mark of all great literature.

M. STANLEY WRENCH.

* "The Foster Mother." By Ernest Pérochon. 6s. (Philpot.)

THRILLERS.*

Serious-minded people—lawyers, politicians, divines, and we believe even certain authors of admitted high-brow pretensions—never read anything except "shockers" on their holidays, and among the purveyors of this indispensable form of literature none has a more facile pen or a readier invention than Mr. Edgar Wallace, whose two latest essays in this wise lie before us. Perusal of them is no difficult matter; one picks either book up and reads on to the end in an hour or so, with hearty explosions by the way and that sort of loud guffaw which does one so much good. Even do they inspire the reader to become deductive himself, just like one of Mr. Wallace's own amateur detectives, and to "reconstruct" the episode on which this nimble-witted and industrious word-spinner puts in a somewhat hectic six weeks—it must have been



Mr. Edgar Wallace.

* "The Angel of Terror." By Edgar Wallace. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)—"Mr. Justice Maxell." By Edgar Wallace. 7s. (Ward, Lock.)

very recently, the flavour is so topical—on the Côte d'Azur, with a typewriter on his hotel dressing-table, a two-seater car in the garage, a season ticket for the *Cercle Privée* in the inside pocket of his dinner jacket, and the Sunday papers from London coming up on the tray with the *petit déjeuner*. No need to look further for plots or local colour. Crime and criminals are clearly for Mr. Wallace subjects of intriguing interest. He may take liberties with the credulity of his most hypnotised reader, but what of that? When the "Angel of Terror," a beauteous blonde who has just sworn away the life of her ex-fiancé, withdraws from the witness-box at the Old Bailey, what else can His Lordship do but lay a small square of black silk carefully over white wig and break the news to the tall, impassive fellow in the dock that he is "for it," because naturally "nobody who saw the young girl in the box, a pathetic and, if I may say, a beautiful figure, could accept for one moment your fantastic explanation." But we are only on page six, and there are 294 pages more to come. Does the resource of this angelic being fail her in any of the thousand and one tight corners that still remain to be negotiated before she skedaddles out of the story in somebody else's motor-boat, bound for the African coast in company with a masculine fellow-crook and £100,000 in hard cash? It is hardly likely. And it matters very little about the cash having been the heroine's, because there is five times as much left for Angel No. 2 and her young man to amuse themselves with. He was her solicitor, too, and the fees he must have earned in 300 pages of amateur-detective work must have been worth keeping in the family. As for "Mr. Justice Maxell," he is almost as remarkable a character as the angelic Jean. When a not quite immaculate K.C. who dabbles in shady finance, he finds himself elevated to the Supreme Court bench just in time to give his late partner a sentence of twenty years for trifling with the Companies Act, which seems a little stiff in the circumstances. Obviously the prisoner thinks so, and in fear of horrible reprisals when his victim comes out, the judge resigns in a hurry and clutches at the baronetcy providentially offered by a grateful Cabinet. Lots of other things happen, but not the things you might expect. Trust Mr. Wallace to prove ingenious enough for that.

ASHLEY GIBSON.

THE LOEB CLASSICS.*

It is always a satisfaction to mark the further development of this excellent series of Greek and Latin texts, printed side by side with their English renderings, certain annotations and a reasonably full index being added in each case. Among most recent additions there may be mentioned a second volume of the "Institutio Oratoria" of Quintilian, translated by Mr. H. E. Butler, M.A., who is Professor of Latin in London University. The present instalment contains the fourth to the sixth books, which are rendered into easy English, not especially distinctive, but always smooth in reading and having an occasional rhythmic motion. The "Institutio" will be completed in four volumes. Mr. Carleton L. Brownson, an American scholar connected with the College of the City of New York, is in the course of translating Xenophon's "Hellenica" and "Anabasis," in three volumes, the second of which is before us, containing "Hellenica," VI, VII, and "Anabasis," I to III. We understand that the "Apology" and "Symposium" will be added to the third volume, the versions in this case being by Mr. O. J. Todd. The "Cyropædia" has already appeared, making two volumes in the series, and the translator is Mr. Walter Miller. The Loeb edition of Plutarch's "Lives" has reached its tenth and penultimate volume, under the loving care of Professor Bernardotte Perrin, who spent the last nine years of his life in producing this English version. The general editors of the series tell us in a prefatory note, to which a sad interest attaches, that Plutarch was Professor Perrin's favourite author and that he was inspired by the hope of producing a rendering which would make the "famous men of ancient Greece and Rome," depicted by the great biographer, "as familiar to the next generation as they were to the youth of his own boyhood." They speak also of the eminent success which he has attained. Unfortunately Professor Perrin passed away in August, 1920, and will not see the full fruition of his notable undertaking; but it is a satisfaction to add that he put "the finishing touches" to the final volume a few months before his death, so that the task is complete and will be with us in due course. It is designed to include an extensive general index. The "Lives" contained in the tenth volume are those of Agis and Cleomenes, Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, Philopœmen and Titus Flaminius.

Mr. H. G. Evelyn White, M.A., of Wadham College, Oxford, has completed his translation of Ausonius, the Latin poet who was born at Bordeaux in the fourth century A.D. It is very pleasant to read over the epistles and compare the originals with their usually happy rendering, though it bears for the most part all the marks of translation. Readers of Ausonius will remember that there are not only certain letters addressed to his pupil Paulinus, but the replies of the latter, which are notable in their zeal for Christ. Indeed Paulinus became a priest and was Bishop of Nola at the beginning of the fifth century. It has been said that his master ended by adopting the same faith, but there is no evidence in his writings, and in his correspondence with Paulinus it is quite clear that he had not. All that is extant breathes the spirit of the old religion and the epigrams speak for themselves, "wanton verses," indeed, and Mr. White perforce has left many to speak for themselves in the Latin only. The "Eucharistus" of another Paulinus, supposed to be a grandson of Ausonius, is added at the end of the volume, and is the first known instance of its rendering into any modern language. It is an autobiographical poem, of little consequence as literature, but of interest on the personal and historical side. It is a life-poem, a thank-offering for life, its divine direction and final deliverance, after many misfortunes, into a haven of peace. It was written in A.D. 459, Paulinus being then in his eighty-third year.

Professor Francis G. Atkinson—of Brown's University—is to be thanked for his extremely careful edition and translation in one volume of all that remains of the great comic poet of Athens, who is called "the lovable" Menander by Ausonius. The introductory and bibliographical matter is admirable, and the speculative reconstructions of missing parts in "The Arbitrants," "The Girl from Samos" and "The Girl who gets her Hair cut Short" are skilful, whatever they may draw from previous editorial work. Menander was a child when the Greek states came under the rule of Philip of Macedon, and he died—or, as some say, committed suicide—in 293 B.C.

The Loeb texts and translations of Callimachus and Lycophron by Dr. A. W. Mair, Professor of Greek in Edinburgh University, and of Aratus by Mr. G. R. Mair, head master of Spier's School, Beith, are offered as an introduction to Alexandrine literature. Callimachus and Aratus were fellow-students at Athens. The latter is thought to have been born about 315 B.C. and the former in 310. Lycophron is a little earlier, the date of his birth being put between 330 and 325. To have the "Hymns" of Callimachus to the gods, the poem on Astronomy of Aratus and Lycophron's dark "Alexandra," a prolonged prophecy supposed to be uttered by Cassandra during the Trojan War and foretelling the Rome to come—to have these, in texts and renderings, within the covers of a single volume, is a gift of price.

The Loeb Plato is a large undertaking and proceeds slowly. Professor H. N. Fowler, of Western Reserve University, produced the first volume some considerable time ago; it contains the "Euthyphro," "Apology," "Crito," "Phædo" and "Phædrus," and is now in its third impression. A second, just issued by the same editor, includes the "Theætetus" and "Sophist." Five

* The Loeb Library. Recent additions. 10s. each. (Heinemann.)

further volumes by various hands are published as this review goes to press, these including the third and fourth volume of Mr. H. E. Butler's Quintilian; Dr. W. G. Wright's Philostratus and Eunapius, the first of Dr. Magie's three volumes of the Scriptores Historiæ Augustæ; and the first of Mr. J. M. Edmonds's Lyra Græca.

A. E. WAITE.

OUTSIDE THE RADIUS.*

The explorers (including the scribes among them) have admittedly been pretty ruthlessly active in our time, but the world is still full of the most wonderful things and, too, of whole vast territories and storehouses of bizarre novelty and picaresque romance—at all events for folk who are gifted and wise enough to conserve their faculties of appreciation and impressionable receptivity. The English-speaking peoples will have become decadent indeed when, if ever, they lose their appetite for wandering, for adventure-seeking meanderings in the by-ways; but that time is not yet. Consider else such a silhouette as this, of a Manchester bagman, if you please:

"Nineteen years earlier he had ridden into Fez, disguised as a Moor, he told me. He had never been on a horse before, and couldn't speak a word of Arabic. He had samples in one saddle-bag and a stork chick in the other. 'Picked it up in Rabat, and took a fancy to the little blighter,' he said. 'The Moors would have murdered me if they'd found out; storks are sort of sacred here, you know. . . . When I was a nipper an uncle tipped me a sovereign,' he went on. 'I spent it in a day-trip to Boulogne, paddle-pusher from Margate. That whetted my appetite for foreign travel. I swore I'd see the world, and I have, all of it; but now, by James, I can't stop! I was on the point of retiring in 1914 when war broke out, and I had to carry on to release the youngsters. After the war, the boom, and the youngsters couldn't handle it. Then came this slump, and the firm said: "Here, for God's sake go out and save what you can; you're the only man who can do it!" And so I go on, and, my soul, ain't I tired of it!—hotels, trains, hotels, ships, hotels, cars, and hotels again. I've got a home, but I never see it. My own kids hardly know me. Last time I got back my youngest boy ran and told the wife there was a strange man in the house. Ever heard of the Wandering Jew? Well, here he is—and all through a day trip to Boo-bloominglong.'"

This in a motor-bus on the road from Rabat to Casablanca; almost within sight of Gibraltar—that Clapham Junction of the South and Near East, it is true, yet withal a quarter in which, when the present writer knew it best, a couple of decades back, there not only was no hint of anything like omnibuses, but no wheeled vehicle of any sort or kind, nor any road upon which one could have been drawn, nor anything much else that seemed nearer to the twentieth century than the Book of Deuteronomy.

The passage quoted is from Mr. Crosbie Garstin's "The Coasts of Romance"—a volume which should be regarded in the most friendly light by all compilers of guide-books, and even perhaps of orthodox "travel books," and certainly by Messrs. Cook and all their rivals; for it is delightfully unorthodox, contains nothing you would look for, or find, in guide-books, and withal is admirably calculated to stimulate the wanderlust and attract visitors to its picturesque background—Southern Spain and Morocco. If the sketches here reproduced are the author's own, his pencil has served him no less well than his pen.

Lady Warren's wanderlust steered her somewhat to the eastward of Mr. Crosbie Garstin's course; and her "Through Algeria and Tunisia on a Motor-Bicycle" was the tangible result thereof. Here again it is safe to say that the guide-book compilers may welcome an advance courier, rather than fear a rival or competitor; for while Lady Warren displays considerable feminine practicality of a kind that will be helpful to future adventurers of the unpractical and sentimental male sex, her lively pages are agreeably void of all the less digestible forms of Baedekerisms, though the book does include some useful motor-cycle detail too. As for her pleasant, graphic, chatty descriptive matter—the story of her journey—even the curmudgeonly critic is disarmed in advance by her modest advertisement of the fact that her book is not for the experienced traveller, but is "food for the babes and sucklings . . . who will not be blasé at my naïve discoveries and enthusiasms." As a plain fact, the book is full of very naïve discoveries and enthusiasms; (and so is its writing, especially where the author resorts to other languages than her own); and one is glad of it. But for these it would not be worth reading; because of these, it is a bright, entertaining and quite readable record of an amusing holiday.

Possessed of no other claim than may be represented by a few long-over-past years of seafaring and considerable subsequent sea travel, the present writer craves permission to add a name to the select roll of those who, without owing much to, or borrowing anything from books or their makers, have contrived by means of the written word truly to add to our knowledge and appreciation of the whaler's life. The name is that of William John Hopkins—is there not a fine, salt, "Down-East" sort of tang to it?—and his book, "She Blows! And Sparm at That!" is the best of its kind that has seen the light since the coming of such pre-war work as "Round the Horn Before the Mast"; or so it would seem to the present writer, who ventures, at the least of it, to vouch that this simple, moving, graphic (and exceptionally well illustrated) story of a whaler's life, in the warm seas, is real, essentially true, and honest as the day.

As a piece of writing, one will only say that it is admirably unaffected, straightforward and readable. One gathers that the writer is a veteran seaman; assuredly he is no second Joseph Conrad. But if his diction owes little to literary craftsmanship, his story owes nothing to derivation of any sort or kind. It is just a piece of salted life, as it were, taken straight from the brine of the harness cask, where no taint of midnight oil or any other product of sophistication could ever have reached it. A big, full book, it is opulent and spacious, generous and kind, heartening as the Trade Wind, and as full of meat as "Robinson Crusoe." It is crammed with curious and vividly interesting bits of seafaring and whaling lore and out-of-the-way experience. (Conceive of the nose of a swordfish piercing through eighteen inches of solid oak, and projecting eight inches beyond that!) "She Blows" is a really fascinating book, and one of those rare modern writings which may well equally delight the heart of childhood, maturity and old age.

A. J. DAWSON.

* "The Coasts of Romance." By Crosbie Garstin. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)—"Through Algeria and Tunisia on a Motor-Bicycle." By Lady Warren. 10s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)—"She Blows! And Sparm at That!" By William John Hopkins. 10s. 6d. (Constable.)

THE "ELIA" OF CRICKET.*

It has been freely rumoured that since Mr. Neville Cardus began to travel with the Lancashire County cricket eleven as "Cricketer" for the *Manchester Guardian*, that newspaper has almost doubled its circulation. For the truth of this we cannot vouch; but we can at least declare that it deserves to. Lancashire cricketing folk ought to think themselves fortunate to have the doings of their favourites chronicled so nobly. Mr. Cardus has entirely transformed the old method of cricket journalism; he has made literature of the game in a way that already assures him the enviable position of old Nyren's successor. And more; for while present-day poets are mostly talking about poetry, he is making it on the spot and telegraphing it over the wires to his newspaper in the form of a critical article every afternoon. "A Cricketer's Book" is an anthology of his work during the past three seasons. He sees the game as a thing of beauty and grace, with happiness, not victory or defeat, its ultimate objective; and even his strictly technical criticism is written from this

* "A Cricketer's Book." By Neville Cardus ("Cricketer" of the *Manchester Guardian*). With an Introduction by A. C. Maclaren. 5s. (Grant Richards.)

fine and truly sporting standpoint. "My book, I am afraid, is the book of one who has loved the summer game irrationally," he tells us in his introduction; but Mr. Maclaren disposes on the very next page of any fear lest for practical purposes the volume will be found too "highfalutin." And yet the essays are all rich with the flavour of "Elia"; nothing—not even the brilliant day-by-day records of the Test matches of last year which comprise a section by themselves—will give cricketers any greater thrill than the pages on Tom Richardson, "An Old England Player," "The Sense of Proportion" and "On Taking a Game Too Seriously." They come of a sweet and cultured nature; they crackle with the humour of one who will get his friendly laugh out of most things. If only more of us could see the world as this "Elia" of cricket sees it—"just green, fresh grass and sunshine, and jolly companions in white"—what a sweet o' the year we might have the whole year round!

T. M.

HIGH ROMANCE.*

Mr. Cunninghame-Graham is of course incurably romantic, and since he bade the public an unforgettable farewell in a glowing epitaph upon the passing years and the general futility of modern things, he has brought to port even more substantial literary cargoes. From the fugitive sketches and impressions of the period when he professed he was no professional writer—merely a breath of the past best left to sigh unheard—he has settled himself down and written with the deliberate intention and accumulation of a Scots professor. One may cherish a charming if fantastic idea that should Mr. Graham cast his pen with finality into the fire-place he would, on this hypothesis, publish about 1924 a twelve-volume account of the Discovery of Buenos Ayres.

In this latest excursion of his in "The Conquest of New Granada," which he adds diffidently, but with a certain quiet courage, is the "Life of Gonzalo Jimenez de Quesada," he befriends the perturbed reviewer in the preface—a preface quoted more or less *in extenso* by countless baffled gentlemen with a column to fill—and remarks that Quesada was as great as Pizarro or Cortés and that the empire of New Granada—which, need I add, is Colombia—was far more remote and just as wonderful as Mexico or Peru.

There is in all Mr. Graham's work and particularly in his prefaces, a kind of magic rhetoric almost irresistible, and touched to gold I am certain by the warmth of his own great passion for old scenes and shattered hopes:

> "There has been," he says, "but one real conquest worthy of the name—that of the New World. The human race in all its annals holds no record like it. Uncharted seas, unnavigated gulfs; new constellations; the unfathomable black pit of the Magellan clouds; the Cross hung in the sky; the very needle varying from the pole; islands innumerable and an unknown world rising from out the sea; all unsuspected races living in a flora never seen by Europeans, made it an achievement unique in all the history of mankind."

But I must admit a sentence like that leaves me cold. I am all for romance and high achievement in the things Mr. Graham chronicles, but when I recall the tragic figure of Consulheiro, of whom he wrote so recently, I feel a little disturbed. The Brazilian mystic came near to genuine adventure and true achievement because in following an ideal he was ground to powder, whereas Cortés and Quesada followed the lure of power and gold and conquest, and gave to the empires they are said to have founded very little beyond a race of picturesque half-breeds. If one is ambitious to declaim the imperishable conquests of humanity and their spiritual reactions upon men and time, they are to be sought not in the annihilation of savages, but in the superb isolation of lost endeavour which in our own day was repeated in the death of Scott.

That said, there remains the actual story (or history if you prefer it) and it must be readily admitted that Quesada, in an age when cruelty and violence were not merely practised but accepted as the essential activities of Christian warfare, preserved some of the qualities which Cortés, for instance, lacked. To Cortés broken faith, torture, treachery, butchery were the means by which the power of Spain was most gloriously advanced. Quesada, judged by this standard, was a man of weaker stuff, for he treated the Indians (who in their intolerance towards civilisation resisted his band of gallant "conquistadores," i.e. gentlemen sheathed in steel and armed with shot and powder) with some consideration, he founded cities and established some system of trade. But he was a dreary failure in one respect, and therefore regarded sadly by Church and State. He omitted to send home gold, and however fiercely the heart may throb to the chants of conquest, it is the rumble of wagons stacked with treasure that re-echoes down the streets of time and history.

FREDERICK WATSON.

* "The Conquest of New Granada." By R. B. Cunninghame-Graham. 15s. (Heinemann.)

THE LEGENDS OF SMOKEOVER.*

Principal Jacks is better known to most of us as editor of the *Hibbert Journal* than as presiding over Manchester College, Oxford, or again as the author of a volume called "The Alchemy of Thought" than as the biographer of Stopford Brooke. He has written stories before—witness "Philosophers in Trouble"—and in and out of them has given specimens of ability as a man of wit and satire. In his quarterly review we meet with him more especially as one who is versed deeply in the deeper thought of the day. The present volume is at once characteristic and unexpected—characteristic because it has something of all the qualities just intimated and is original in its own way, as he is always, but unexpected also because it is like nothing that he has done previously. It is in any case a book which will set its readers thinking in several vital directions, if they are capable of anything that it is worth while calling thought. It is not what ordinarily people would call religious, and yet it makes for righteousness, for one grows better in the reading, as if the value of things that matter had risen suddenly in our esteem and the false values had come down to their proper level of *nil*. Smokeover is "a city much like London," as Shelley said once of another place which it would be invidious to mention in the present connection. In a sense its legends belong to a world philosophised, its economics to faerie, its dramatis personæ to a realm not realised where daily life is exercised normally in heroics; but in a second sense, which is perhaps truer, the place is just like this one, the people are just like some of us, but a little lifted up in a motive light of otherwhere. It should be said that Smokeover is a state, a presiding spirit rather than a place, and it happens that its legends are those of rebels who are on strike for a kingdom "not founded on smoke." It comes about therefore that all its personalities are types, written over with eloquent meanings from head to foot, and all its events are omens; yet it is in the sense that we also are types, full of messages for those who can read, and our every event is a portent. The fact that the book claims to be one of legends, the divisions of which are marked plainly by italicised paragraphs after the manner of interludes, does not prevent it from being an ordered story, in continuity from beginning to end, and the fact that it is a parable, "with child of great intent," does not prevent it from being as much like a novel as such a thing can well be, very living too in the telling. It begins in Smokeover and ends on the verge of Utopia, amidst largess of poetical justice for those who concern the reader. It is Arabian Nights, if you like, or a scheme of universal reconstruction of a very practical kind, which is perhaps the same thing. If it is not a guide to the perplexed, like that of Maimonides, Principal Jacks is to be congratulated on a brilliant book which can be approached and appreciated from several angles, including paradoxical philosophy.

A. E. W.

* "The Legends of Smokeover." By L. P. Jacks. 12s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

CONTRASTS.*

Of these three books one is a disappointment, another is merely a painful record, but the third is a work of art. So let us deal first with the third, "The Hidden Force," so wonderfully well translated by the late A. Teixeira de Mattos.

The scene of the book is laid in Labuwangi in Java, and the story deals with the gradual decline and fall of the Resident, Van Oudijck, the strong, industrious and efficient administrator who, content to perform his duties conscientiously and to wait patiently for the deserved promotion which must one day come to him, has no fear of the silent and mysterious forces that ultimately sap away the strength and integrity of the whites who would control the destinies of the Eastern world. But in the end even he succumbs to this silent inevitability, this haunting melancholy of the Java seas. His wife, Leonie, and her stepson and stepdaughter, Theo and Doddie, are of mixed blood, and that blood is too hot and passionate to flow evenly in the channels prescribed by the western conventions of a stolid Dutchman.

Blindly in love with Leonie, Van Oudijck never suspects her, not even when she is lying in the next room in the arms of his own son. For her smile disarms him—and everybody else. She is so serene and self-confident that, though the station is full of most amazing (and true) tales of her depravity, no one can feel animus towards her when in her presence. Her shield is "her unfathomable indifference. She took an interest only in her own body and her own soul." To everything else, everything, she was totally indifferent. But her indifference was radiant, "devoid of contempt, or envy, or emotion, it was merely indifference." She lived for the sensuous moment, in a world of amorous—and none too fastidious—intrigue and the hot fantasies of a perverted imagination.

Finally Van Oudijck's suspicion is roused and life with her becomes impossible. Further he has disgraced the family of the native Regent, and the mysterious forces of the East are set in motion against him. He is contemptuous, but there are inexplicable happenings; and at last he is driven away, ruined and broken, in dumb, wondering amazement at the hidden forces of the marvellous East. A splendid story, wonderfully told.

As might be expected, the war is responsible for Clara Vieberg's painful record of events. In "Daughters of Hecuba" she deals with the sufferings and tragedies of a group of women in a small German town during the first two years of the war. The war robs them all of their menfolk—sons, fathers, husbands—and each agonises in her own way, and each for different reasons. One has an Italian husband, who falls in battle. Another has a child by a young soldier who is prevented by his mother from marrying her; and both women suffer accordingly, the elder woman's pain being intensified by remorse. In the absence of her husband one woman seeks consolation in the arms of other men, and finds that this pleasure must be bitterly paid for; whilst another ends in a madhouse. And there is the distress and privation and aimless, apparently endless, misery that follows in the train of war. Pain, and pain, and pain, portrayed without hate or bitterness; but also without that spiritual power which makes of suffering a basis for beautiful creative work.

Captain Mikkelsen's book, "Frozen Justice," is only disappointing because it fails to give us the necessary atmosphere of the frozen North. And this is surprising, for the author tells an excellent story and he tells it well. He has lived among the Eskimos; he knows their customs and traditions; he fully appreciates the fundamental virtues of these semi-savages, and there is a compelling power in his rendering of the tragic struggle of the primitive Eskimo headman against the lawless whites who come and demoralise and ruin his wife, his home, himself and his whole tribe. But his pictures of

* "Frozen Justice." By Ejnar Mikkelsen. 7s. 6d. (Gyldendal.)—"Daughters of Hecuba." By Clara Vieberg. 7s. 6d. (Allen & Unwin.)—"The Hidden Force." By Louis Couperus. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

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Eskimo life and Eskimo mentality suffer from overstrain. There is a sense of effort about them; so that, instead of being quite clear-cut and impressive, they are marred by a shade of artificiality. Nevertheless "Frozen Justice" is not to be condemned. It is a good book.

THE PERFECT PAINTER.*

How many must have had the same experience? I remember journeying to Holland many, many years ago with the conscientious intention of studying there the art of Rembrandt and of Hals, but I got no further than The Hague when I was snared by the loveliness of Vermeer. The Rembrandts and the Hals were seen indeed, seen and not forgotten, but all the time I was under the spell of Vermeer of Delft. I have been there ever since, and once spellbound by Vermeer there is no escape.

It was the same in Paris last spring when that wonderful exhibition of *Art Hollandais* was held in the glass-houses of the Tuileries. As Mr. E. V. Lucas writes in his delightful little monograph:

"The outstanding surprise . . . was the work of Jan Vermeer of Delft. The Rembrandts astonished by their number and their sombre power; the other masters, ancient and modern, from Nicholas Maes to Matthew Maris, from Jan Steen to Van Gogh, had each his devotees; but it was the three Vermeers that provoked the exclamations of wonder and delight: the 'View of Delft,' with its golden placidity and charm; the 'Maidservant Pouring Milk,' at once so small and so big, with no detail neglected, and yet its effect one of massive breadth; and, most of all, the 'Head of a Young Girl,' that marvel of paint, that miracle of sweetness and light."

What is the secret that makes his work so lovable? Mr. Lucas, in a happy phrase, speaks of a Vermeer as being "steeped in a kind of white magic," and Sir C. J. Holmes, in an introduction to this monograph, justifies the words and amplifies their meaning. The "whiteness" is the cool light of day producing delightful and unexpected tones of cool colour.

"Yellow and blue in particular were transmuted into hues incomparable."

The "magic" arises from Vermeer's

". . . suppression of every trace of human handiwork which might intervene between the spectator and complete optical illusion."

Yet the beauty of a Vermeer is not merely dependent on its success as an illusion. In his paintings we find the positive virtues of "significant form" and a tender loveliness of colour, a "crystalline purity of light," never surpassed in painting. The long and short of it is that the title of "The Perfect Painter" belongs, as Mr. Lucas truly says, not to Andrea del Sarto but to Jan Vermeer of Delft.

"Of Vermeer we know nothing save that he was a materialistic Dutchman who applied paint to canvas with a dexterity and charm that have never been equalled: in short, with perfection. His pictures tell us that he was not imaginative and not unhappy; they do not suggest any particular richness of personality: there is nothing in them or in his life to inspire a poet as Andrea and Lippo Lippi inspired Browning, and as Romney inspired Tennyson. Vermeer was not like that.

"But when it comes to perfection in the use of paint, when it comes to 'The Perfect Painter'—why, here he is. His contemporary, Rembrandt of the Rhine (whose hand has been traced by the experts in nearly seven hundred paintings) is a giant beside him; but ruggedness was part of his strength. His contemporary, Franz Hals of Haarlem, could dip his brush in red and transform the pigment into pulsating blood with one flirt of his wrist; and yet think of his splendid carelessness elsewhere. His contemporary, Jan Steen of Leyden, had a way of kindling with a touch an eye so that it danced with vivacity and dances still, after all these years; but what a sloven he could be with his backgrounds! . . . And so one might go on with the other great painters—the Italians and the Spanish and the English and the French, naming one after another, all with more to them as personalities than Vermeer, all doing more work, yet all, even Michelangelo and Leonardo, even Correggio, even Raphael, even Andrea, even Chardin (who was, so to speak, Vermeer's love-child), falling beneath him in the mere technical mastery of the brush and the palette—no one having with such accuracy and happiness adjusted the means to the desired end. Vermeer aimed low, but at his best he stands as near perfection as is possible."

There are thirty-seven universally accepted paintings by Vermeer; thirteen of them are reproduced in Mr. Lucas's little book, and others are described, for this essay is in great measure an account of the author's wanderings abroad in search of Vermeers. One feels inclined to congratulate him on not having succeeded in seeing them all: it gives him something to live for. Let us hope that Mr. Lucas's graceful pen may still be active in ten years' time, when he will have the opportunity of outpouring more of his joyous and well-justified enthusiasm on the occasion of Vermeer's tercentenary.

FRANK RUTTER.

* "Vermeer of Delft." By E. V. Lucas. 10s. 6d. (Methuen.)

MISUNDERSTANDINGS.*

It is possible that a certain section of American society will not appreciate the brilliance of Mrs. Edith Wharton's picture of its habits. No other author can describe so incisively, so dispassionately, a set of people who, as far as any real use in the world is concerned, are parasitical and worthless, and at the same time interest the reader to a point where interruption is detestable. Much of that interest, we are aware, arises from the sheer cleverness of Mrs. Wharton's style—which she has made a perfect medium for expression in her particular field of fiction. She has the "touches" that mean serene satisfaction to the critical reader; as for example in sentences describing Coral Hicks in the present book:

"A sombre zeal for knowledge filled the mind of this strange girl; she appeared interested only in fresh opportunities of adding to her store of facts. They were illuminated by little imagination and less poetry; but, carefully catalogued and neatly sorted in her large cool brain, they were always as accessible as the volumes in an up-to-date public library."

Irresistibly we recall a phrase from a wonderful picture of Colonel Assingham by a master of the art of fiction: "The hollows of his eyes were deep and darksome, but the eyes, within them, were like little blue flowers plucked that morning." The link of genius unites them.

As for story, apart from style, there is never any reason to complain of Mrs. Wharton. If people are worthless they may be well worth writing about; all the more so, perhaps, since they afford scope for ironic comment and emotional colour by their special ideas of what is moral. Nick Lansing and Susy, his wife, had the splendid notion of a compact that if either saw, at some future period, a "better chance," an opportunity of getting greater happiness, the other partner would not stand in the way. What confusion this caused, how the two, who were the only real lovers in the whole rich, shabby crowd, worked out their laborious way to final and beautiful comprehension, is told in her unrivalled manner by the author; her story would be above the average even if we had only the last chapters, which are an idyll. But it savours of impertinence to suggest the word "average" in relation to Mrs. Wharton. Her touch is as sure as ever. "The Glimpses of the Moon" is far better than "The House of Mirth"; better even than "The Reef." And if she chooses a world where mischief lurks for idle hands to do and where ideals are hung with dollars, she does not present it in rosy lights. She gives the boredom behind the brilliance, the heartache behind the laughter and chatter, and sometimes—as in this fine novel—the love that burns with clear flame whatever its surroundings may happen to be. If the flame flickers—well, is not that the essence of many masterpieces? Where would "Diana of the Crossways" or "The Tragic Muse" be placed were it not for that slight unsteadiness.

WILFRID L. RANDELL.

* "The Glimpses of the Moon." By Edith Wharton. 7s. 6d. (Appleton.)

OLD ENGLISH AND OLD NORSE VERSE.*

The poems contained in this volume, with prose translations and ample introductions and notes, comprise the Anglo-Saxon poems known as "The Wanderer," "The Seafarer," "The Wife's Complaint," "The Husband's Message," "The Ruin," and "The Battle of Brunanburh." The Norse poems are "The Hrafnsmál," "The Battle of Hafsfjord," "The Eiriksmál," "The Hakonarmál," "The Darraðarljóð," "The Sonartorrek," and "The Battle of the Goths and Huns." On what principle these have been chosen out is not very clear. All that the author tells us in the preface is that

> "It is generally agreed that the first six pieces included in this book are among the most interesting examples of Anglo-Saxon poetry which have come down to us; yet with few exceptions they have received comparatively little attention from English scholars. They have all been translated into English before . . . but most of these translations are in verse. Prose translations and commentaries are few in number, and are now practically inaccessible to the majority of students."

From this it appears that the book is intended to meet the needs of students, an object which is fully attained. Yet it has a wider interest, as a study of it shows that, though the selection of the poems presented may be somewhat arbitrary, they give a fairly correct idea of the general contrast and occasional resemblances between Anglo-Saxon and Norse poetry, besides showing why neither can be expected to be widely read.

For the latter result the way in which they have come down to us is largely responsible. Anglo-Saxon poetry has reached us only in a few isolated MSS., which have come mostly from monastic libraries. The poems they contain are therefore mainly religious, while even the secular ones have been recast on lines that suited them for monastic reading, or have been used as a theme on which to hang pious moralisings. In a word, they are generally dull. If they escape this charge they are often incomplete, or from other reasons obscure. The two that appear in this volume as "The Wife's Complaint" and "The Husband's Message," read together, give us a dramatic though incomplete picture of a husband and wife who have been estranged and separated by evil design, with the prospect of their being reunited. But the editor in the introduction to the poems tells us that it is not certain that the component parts of these poems belong together, and that until further evidence is forthcoming we should hesitate to regard them as a whole! This does not encourage the ordinary reader. In the case of another poem, "The Ruin," the MS. has been so badly damaged that something like over one fourth of a short poem of less than fifty lines has been rendered unintelligible. This is the more to be deplored, as the poem is one which has apparently suffered little, if at all, from monkish editing, and gives a striking picture of a Roman town, possibly Bath, which has fallen into ruin. The Norse poems have likewise come down to us in a very incomplete state, often largely as quotations in prose sagas, and have suffered much at the hands of transcribers, though they have not undergone the same re-editing under Christian influence as the Anglo-Saxon poems.

As regards the spirit of the two schools of poetry, the contrast between them is largely due to the fact that the Anglo-Saxon poems that have reached us are those that have survived the monkish crucible. The Norse poems also were to a great extent preserved by Churchmen and in the monasteries of Iceland. But the Anglo-Saxon Christian was much closer to heathenism than the Icelandic and his attitude towards it was much more uncompromising. The result is that we know very little of Anglo-Saxon heathenism, while what we know of the Norse mythology is almost entirely derived from the literary remains collected by Icelandic bishops and monks. Yet there are indications that an equal wealth of songs and stories of their heathen

* "Anglo-Saxon and Norse Poems." Edited and translated by N. Kershaw. 14s. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

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XUM

days had once existed among the Anglo-Saxons. The difference of spirit in this respect may be exemplified by the fact that while in the Anglo-Saxon "Beowulf," a long epic dealing with the heathen days, there is no reference to the heathen mythology, in "Hákonormál" an Icelandic poet represents a Christian king, Hakon, Athelstan's foster-son, as going to Valhalla in the heathen way.

The battle pieces show a greater resemblance between the two literatures, though even here there is a noticeable difference between the Anglo-Saxon and the Norse spirit. But we have not space to go further into this or to call attention to the "Battle of the Goths and Huns," which has been so strikingly reproduced in our own day on a vaster scale.

The only criticism we would offer on the translation is that the author, who in her preface seems to claim it as a merit that her translation is in prose, apparently felt it a duty to make it also prosy and to avoid the obvious translation, even when obviously correct. It is rather a shock to find in "The Battle of Brunanburh" *paet graege deor wulf on wealde* rendered by "that grey beast, the wolf of the forest," when we still have in English the words "wold" and "weald," which exactly represent the Anglo-Saxon.

ALBANY F. MAJOR.

SIX AT SEVEN-AND-SIX.*

It is somewhat surprising to realise that Miss Dorothy Canfield's novel, "The Bent Twig," was published in America seven years ago and has only just appeared in a British edition. It is true that the book had been widely read here in the intervening years, but that makes its belated appearance all the more remarkable. I wonder how many scores of vastly inferior novels have been published here in the years that it has taken this brilliant piece of work to cross the Atlantic! It is a long story, but one the length of which is an added virtue—for it never lapses into boredom; we follow the story of the two daughters of Professor Marshall, from their first clash with schoolfellows to the end, with vivid interest, and become acquainted with a number of finely delineated characters in the course of it—and above all with the wonderful, understanding, fascinating mother of Judith and Sylvia. It is that mother who in a moment of crisis in the life of one of the girls says, "It's what she's made of that'll count—that's the *only* thing that'll count when a crisis comes," and the whole story may be said to bear out the truth of the words. It is what she is made of that brings Sylvia through in the end, it is the bending of the twigs that is responsible for the shapeliness or otherwise of those who, in the figure employed in the title, are seen "as trees walking." Miss Canfield's work is already so well known among those who keep in touch with the best of contemporary fiction, however, that little more than a word of welcome should be necessary in the case of this story now reissued.

The second book that I take up is also of American origin. "One Man in His Time," by Ellen Glasgow, which is described as a novel of courage, shares with Miss Canfield's work the distinction of being a carefully planned story, well told both in its characterisation and in its literary style. It would perhaps appear invidious to classify any half-dozen novels taken more or less at random from among the season's output, and yet—without any attempt to place the six in any order of merit—I cannot help saying that it is the two stories by American authors—and both those authors women—that have the most sterling qualities of excellence, of true thought and deep emotion. Miss Ellen Glasgow's book has for central figure a forceful, democratic idealist who has progressed from being a figure in a circus to being Governor of Virginia; for sentimental interest the central figure is that Governor's daughter Patty. The interplay of the old Virginian feelings of aristocracy with the new manifestations of democracy is admirably presented through a number of characters, each of whom is memorable, and so skilfully does the author present her materials that diverse as may be the views of the different protagonists, all claim something of our genuine sympathy. In such a novel as this we may well feel that we have knowledge of the best in certain sections of American life and thought at the present time; it is at once absorbingly interesting as a story and illuminating and suggestive as a presentation of current history in the form of fiction.

Miss Weaver's story is of a different type, in that it comes nearer to the sensational novel, though the author succeeds in making us interested rather in the mind of her heroine than in the incidents in which that heroine plays a part. Irene Davenport visits that part of Yorkshire from which her family had derived, and while there comes as it were under the influence of a woman who had been murdered a hundred years before—and it is only when tragedy threatens anew that the spell is broken. It is an excellently told story of such a kind as, hovering about the borderland of the eerie, gives the reader plenty of thrills.

Mr. G. B. Burgin's new novel is a capital addition to the long series of excellent stories with which he has entertained the public for a number of years. A study in contrasts might well have been used as a sub-title of the romance, "Cyrilla Seeks Herself," for while the eponymous heroine is almost unawakened to matters of love and sex, her friend Laure regards men as her lawful prey and never forgets it. Then Lettiker Lane, K.C., is a clever but by no means prepossessing person with an air of mystery, even of disaster, surrounding him, the clue to which is—drugs; and here again we get the contrast, for his "ghost," or pupil, John Torpicherne, is younger, cleverer than Lane, handsome, frank and debonair. Laure, the schemer, hopes to utilise each of these three to her own ends, while Cyrilla is a self-reliant person of altruistic ways. Mr. Burgin weaves the fates of these four persons into the pattern of his romance in his usual sympathetic, bright and entertaining way.

Mr. Baerlein takes his readers to Mexico and gives them a story which has the charms of freshness of manner and novelty of scene. The house of the fighting-cocks is the house of an Indian breeder of those birds, and the supposed narrator is Juan, the son of that Indian. To the house one day comes a wonderful Spanish wanderer, Don Eugenio Gil, and he takes off Juan as his companion when he goes to seek out the Noahcite philosopher, Don Arcadio. On the journey they rescue Maria, an Indian girl, from her captor. The author, though making the young Indian, Juan, his mouthpiece, has managed to give us a story that suggests such diverse works as "Don Quixote," "Candide" and the romantic wanderings of George Borrow. His wonderful Don Eugenio, with his glib citation of things from classic and other lore, is a delightful figure who provides pleasant entertainment. Readers who look rather for literary flavour than for a succession of definite happenings and an ordered "plot" will find Mr. Baerlein's excursion into fiction a thing of joy.

Another novel essay by a writer who had already worked in other literary fields is "God's Prodigal." Mr. Russell's work is in striking contrast with Mr. Baerlein's. The latter has invested the lawlessness of Mexican revolt with the glamour of romance that is for the time being real; the former has plunged into such melodrama as affords delight to many readers perhaps as something of a relief from reality. He shows us a convict escaped from Dartmoor who is ingeniously placed in a position for impersonating a clergyman. The impersonation is so successful that he is not only accepted as that which he pretends to be, but is able to indulge his old-time hobby of burglary until the

* "The Bent Twig." By Dorothy Canfield. (Constable.)—"One Man in His Time." By Ellen Glasgow. (Murray.)—"The Unseen Player." By Anne Weaver. (Melrose.)—"Cyrilla Seeks Herself." By G. B. Burgin. (Hutchinson.)—"The House of the Fighting Cocks." By Henry Baerlein. (Parsons.)—"God's Prodigal." By A. J. Russell. (Werner Laurie.)

moment comes when he seeks to return something that he had stolen and so meets his fate. The burglar dies, the cleric " disappears," and the reader returns to reality. WALTER JERROLD.

MR. TREVELYAN'S NEW HISTORY.*

Mr. Trevelyan's " British History in the Nineteenth Century " constitutes a survey of the political, economic and colonial expansion of these islands from 1782 to 1901. The former of these years seems awkwardly chosen to start the century, from the point at least of British domestic affairs. The creation of the second Rockingham administration can hardly be said to make 1782 epoch-making; nor, with any regard to probability, can so arbitrary a date be fixed for the beginnings of the modern capitalist system. It is, however, convenient to include Charles James Fox's first Foreign Secretaryship in an account of the revival of the struggle for power between Crown and Parliament; while it is natural to start a period, which ended with the conquest of the two South African Republics, in the year which witnessed the loss of our American colonies. Whatever judgment, however, the reader may pass on Mr. Trevelyan's audacity in commencing the nineteenth century in the beginning of the ninth decade of the eighteenth, he will be compelled to admit that the historian's felicity of style, concinnity of phrasing and sense of grouping and of construction have never before been displayed to such advantage. The compression into four hundred and fifty pages of the essential facts of nineteenth century British history is in itself a remarkable technical achievement; while the life-like fashion in which the features of the leading statesmen are caught—never distorted by party passion, as Castlereagh's might so easily have been, and often heightened by strokes as brilliant as that which applies the epithet " Shakespearean " to Charles James Fox—shows how successfully Mr. Trevelyan can follow in the footsteps of his father and of his father's uncle. The spirit in which his history is written is indeed the spirit of Macaulay, or perhaps I had better say the spirit of modern Liberalism as voiced in the utterances of Mr. Asquith. Macaulay liked Lord Palmerston the best of all English statesmen. Mr. Trevelyan likes him too. And so does Mr. Asquith, judged by what he said recently when he unveiled Onslow Ford's statue of Gladstone. Again Mr. Trevelyan considers Gladstone's first Premiership to be the period of his greatest achievements. Mr. Asquith agrees with him. In the speech to which I have referred he says:

" The real Gladstonian era came into its own after the General Election of 1868; and the four years which followed were a magnificent and almost an unexampled illustration of what can be achieved by Liberalism in the domain both of legislative and administrative work. It was Gladstone who both inspired and guided his party."

Some of Mr. Trevelyan's other judgments, his approval of Canning's seizure of the Danish fleet in 1807, his praise of Castlereagh for his conduct of the Treaty of Vienna, his belief that the Tory reaction which set in in this country as a consequence of the French Revolution was " certainly inevitable and maybe desirable " will, I fancy, hardly be endorsed by the austerer kind of Liberal. Indeed I may take the liberty of pointing out to Mr. Trevelyan that so far was the Tory reaction from being inevitable in 1809 and in 1810, to say nothing of later years, that if Lords Grey and Grenville had only taken the trouble to be civil to Perceval in the one case and to Sheridan in the other, they could easily have become the leading figures in a Coalition Cabinet. It must not, however, be supposed that this " British History " is concerned with home politics only. A considerable section of it is devoted to indicating the main course of events in Greater Britain—in Canada, Australasia, Ireland, India and British Africa; while throughout the narrative the influence exercised on politics by social, economic and humanitarian philosophers

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LEWIS BETTANY.

STUDIES IN LITERATURE.*

If one notes at the outset that the contents of this book are not "studies," strictly speaking, it is in no ungrateful spirit. They are the recreations of a literary man, an enthusiastic scholar and a man who has consciously the knack of making literature interesting to others. Sir Arthur, in fact, excels in the vein of arm-chair conversations which may not answer to the formal requirements of an academic syllabus as it frames itself in an old-fashioned university, but we can hardly conceive an American or Colonial university which would not gladly exchange him for one of its own professors, simply because of this magical power of imbuing his hearers with his own real delight in the English classics. Sometimes his absorption in the newer spirit of the time makes him iconoclastic with the ideas of his predecessors, and he flings in passing a cudgel more than once at the effigy of Matthew Arnold. This is surely to forget, however, that the author of "Essays in Criticism" was the innovator who made Sir Arthur's method possible. There was a deal of the bright undergraduate in Arnold, especially when he tilted at the "young lions of Peterborough Court" and the fulminations of Thunder-ten-Tronckh. But there was a European range about him which made his essays on Heine and Spinoza a revelation to his countrymen; and he handled Celtic themes, universities, Philistinism, and the evolution of religion in a way that made us all his debtors. What is more, Arnold was a poet with no little claim to the epithet "mighty" which Sir Arthur so curiously applies to Tennyson. All of which the author may be ready to concede now that he has had his fling at Arnold for flouting Shelley as ineffectual in the void.

What it is desirable to point out is that this kind of passing slash is inevitable to the way in which the lecturer construes his duties. Indeed he more than half admits that he falls short of his undertaking. He dismisses his own shortcomings with the same grace that he puts into his generous eulogies and still more generous quotations. Whether he talks of Byron and Don Juan, of Shelley or Milton, of Chaucer and his successors, or the great Victorian era, he draws without effort on a mind well stored and turns the effluent off with all the froth and sparkle on it which make it doubly inspiring. He makes Milton something far greater and more vigorous than "the lady of his college," as the poet was called, and he harnesses him to the chariot of personal liberty with a misquotation well worthy of being remembered among the best of things said in this prohibition time:

> "Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour.
> England hath need of thee: she is a fen
> Of mineral waters."

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J. P. C.

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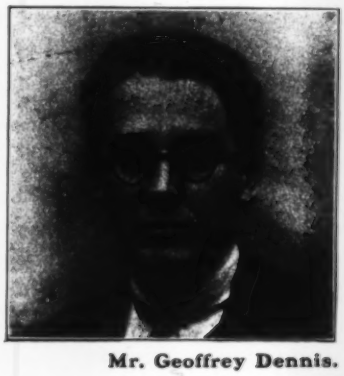

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Few readers will consider that Diana Holford was justified in marrying Hubert Malin; true, she had been engaged to him for years, but long separation and war work had wrought such drastic changes in her that when she visited her fiancé's home she found herself quite out of harmony with him. More unfortunate still she found herself in perfect harmony with his friend, also on a visit. These two foolish young people discussed the matter of their disastrous affection and decided it was only honourable for Diana to carry out her engagement. That is where a great many readers will differ from her—and subsequent happenings more than justify them. As Mrs. Malin she goes out to the East with her husband, and starts her married life with a painful discovery. The lover at home, believing the girl of his choice for ever beyond his reach, also marries, but not for love. Unhappiness ensues, even as tragedy overtakes Diana; she comes back free to wed—and he is tied to a butterfly wife for whom he has never professed any feeling deeper than friendship. Probably real life would leave them in that forlorn situation; romance is kinder, and Mr. Bullivant's romance is certainly one that, while it keeps us in suspense all the way through, leaves us supremely contented at the end. Its pages are rich with the colours and fragrance of the alluring East. A good thrilling adventure story, strung on a love-theme of absorbing interest.

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These stories of immigrant Jews have a point of view and it is well put. When it becomes propaganda we regret it, for the stories themselves accomplish the writer's aim. America, she says, asks for strong hands and does not realise that the Jew brings with these an emotional nature and a warm heart. The construction of the stories shows that the writer is either deficient in a sense of form or is a beginner. It is a question whether the Jewish story-teller, though always interesting, is not as a rule deficient in this quality. His stories seldom show a sense of line, they are exuberant, filled with warm emotion, witness Zangwill, Cournos, Hergesheimer, but apparently the Jew cannot sit patiently working away until under his hands the piece of art takes on the perfect shape. In "Hungry Hearts" is a fine story—one—"The Fat of the Land." It is the hard fortune of the woman who, having had to work hard for her young children, finds she cannot be happy in the idleness that prosperity brings. The story has been written before, but Anzia Yezierska handles it anew and with considerable power.

THE PASSIONATE PURITAN. By Jane Mander. 7s. 6d. net. (The Bodley Head.)

In "The Story of a New Zealand River" Miss Jane Mander brought us into touch with the savage beauty, the splendid desolation of a country seldom explored in fiction over here. Once again in "The Passionate Puritan" we are carried out into the wilds of New Zealand, following the adventures of a young school-teacher who goes into the bush to open a school. Sidney Carey herself is a delightful character, and her various neighbours at Whakapara arouse our interest and curiosity as much as they do hers. Jack Ridgefield, with his grave courtesy, his quiet reliability; the magnificent Mana, and her association with Arthur Devereux's past—Arthur Devereux, the man who brings into Sidney's life such a complexity of joy and sorrow, of confusion and enlightenment. It is an excellent story, told in an easy, natural style, and maintaining an atmosphere of tense expectation; the setting in particular, so vividly described, gives it an unusual attraction for English readers.

ELINOR COLHOUSE. By Stephen Hudson. 5s. (Secker.)

It is quite exceptionally interesting, in these days when every novel-writer assumes the mantle of the philosopher and the penetration of the psychologist, to find a story told straightly and simply, with no digressions upon the complicated mental gymnastics of the characters. Mr. Hudson's plan is to let his people express their feelings by action instead of showing their every thought, and it is a good plan, although the analytical method can work wonders in the hands of a master. Elinor Colhouse, cramped by her countrified surroundings in a small American town, is "all out" to win and marry a young Englishman who visits her. By deliberately seductive art in her dress, and by a cool, calculating skill in bringing on emotional moments, she achieves her great desire—the declaration of Richard Kurt, and the clinching of it almost

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the moment after he had kissed her by the soft words, "You must tell mamma at once we're engaged." Richard, who awakened to realisation of his folly the next morning, did not back out; he married this dangerous, scheming, beautiful man-trap who would not have troubled to give him a second glance had it not been for his prospective wealth. But he conveys to his wife with perfect clearness that she no longer makes any strong appeal to him, and, in spite of her attempts to charm him, he shows only the faintest response. Other characters, lightly drawn, are surprisingly vivid and alive. The end of the book is not the end of the story, and we expect, in due course, to read further into this intriguing position; it is our right, so thoroughly interested have we been in Elinor and her capture.

NINON. By Margaret Peterson. 7s. 6d. (Cassell.)

As in "Dust of Desire," the scene is laid for the most part in tropical Africa, but in "Ninon" the author has sustained a much higher moral tone. Ninon, beautiful and fascinating, the daughter of a chorus girl and brought up by a careful maiden aunt, keeps pure and aloof amid the temptations of the variety stage. Married to Dick Sutley, who loves her passionately, Ninon cannot at once drop the pose of cold, cynical indifference she has adopted all her life. This attitude, in conjunction with accusations made by the girl's drunken stepfather, leads to terrible misunderstandings, entanglements and not a few dramatic incidents. The interest is cleverly sustained and there is a freshness and originality throughout the narrative, also some good descriptive work. Nearly all the characters are very likeable. The author shows the good in each one of them—in even the evil trader, Luck, to whom Ninon entrusts herself in her flight from her husband, and who meets such an awful and well-merited end at the hands of the native king. The young native king, Zidoki, who plays such a dramatic part in Ninon's life, is the most arresting figure in the book. His English education, superimposed on his savage ancestry, brings him nothing but loneliness and final tragedy in the untidy Waring & Gillow furnished house he has built in the English style. A thought-provoking picture!

ANN AND HER MOTHER. By O. Douglas. 7s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Plain tales, like plain girls, may have a charm of their own. And a charm that does not depend on creating a sensation may have a deeper, more lasting value than thrill and wonder. The life story of a Scottish minister's wife does not sound very inspiring material for a novel; one expects a Scottish minister's wife to have a dull and uneventful existence, occupied with the common round of church work; and to be sure Ann's mother was an ordinary woman of her type and had just the sort of life you would have expected her to have. But there is magic in the skill with which Miss Douglas sets down the details of that life in black and white; in the character-drawing; the quiet humour; the little natural touches that bring before us the minister's family, with their troubles and pleasures, their commonplace adventures. Not everybody could have written this book; not everybody could have placed Ann and her mother in homely solitude and made them revivify the past in their conversation, now touched with pathos, now bubbling into laughter. It is a fine achievement. A story of simple things, simple people—more than a story: a vision of real life, of true things.

THE HEIR: A LOVE STORY. By V. Sackville-West. 6s. (Heinemann.)

Miss Sackville-West's new book contains five short stories, of which the finest is the tale which gives its title to the collection. The author has put out her full strength in the picture of Peregrine Chase, a Wolverhampton insurance agent, who becomes heir to an Elizabethan

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manor-house on his aunt's death. The estate is mortgaged and Chase decides to sell. He visits Blackboys to arrange for its disposal, when the spell of the old house breaks in on him, with its twin gables and its weather-seasoned brick, reflected plum-coloured in the still waters of the surrounding moat. His standards of a lifetime totter, standards which are framed in city offices throughout the Wolverhamptons of the world, and he faces poverty to hold his inheritance. The final scene in the auction-room is both a perfectly-staged climax to the story and the crowning of a brilliant character-study of its central figure. The other four tales suffer somewhat by contrast. "The Parrot" and "The Christmas Party" suggest that Miss Sackville-West is too deliberate and too leisurely a writer not to find the limits imposed by a short story sometimes irksome.

The Bookman's Table.

AT SEA WITH JOSEPH CONRAD. By J. G. Sutherland. Captain, R.N.R. 16s. (Grant Richards.)

It would be going too far to claim that Captain Sutherland's memorials of Joseph Conrad will stand in the same relation to the ultimate authoritative life of that great novelist as the "Collectanea" of Dr. Maxwell and the "Johnsoniana" of Bennet Langton stand to Boswell's "Life of Johnson"; for, despite all his hero-worship, the commander of the "Q boat," who had the good fortune to be "At Sea with Joseph Conrad" for several weeks in search of German submarines, has given us no record of the great man's conversations during the trip. Whether he was not industrious enough to take notes of them or is too scrupulous to put them on record is not quite clear. Suffice it, however, to say that while he gives some very interesting and indeed invaluable impressions of Conrad the man and the sailor, and tells us that before he joined the brigantine, rechristened in his honour *Freya*, he had already done his bit on board a minesweeper and in a seaplane, he characterises the talk of his famous brother-seaman instead of reproducing it. We hear Conrad the master mariner giving his opinions on naval training and, in some admirable photographs, we see him taking the wheel; but we never are allowed to listen to Conrad the student of men "speaking out loud and bold." The result is that our curiosity is tantalised rather than satisfied. None the less, Captain Sutherland deserves our gratitude; his book is one which no admirer of the author of "Under Western Eyes" can afford to miss.

14,000 MILES THROUGH THE AIR. By Sir Ross Smith, F.R.G.S. 10s. 6d. (Macmillan.)

The volume in which Sir Ross Smith has described his 14,000 miles' flight through the air from England to Australia makes a narrative so graphic and spirited as to furnish additional reason for regret that so intrepid and resourceful an airman should have met with such an early death. The student of this account of a great adventure will not find himself befogged by a host of technicalities. It is a plain story of a struggle gallantly maintained against rain, snow, ice and clouds, of imminent collisions, narrowly avoided, with trees, gorges and mountain peaks, and of the tedious business awaiting the exhausted explorers at every stopping place, of pouring hundreds of gallons of petrol into the aeroplane's oil-tanks. Four persons only took part in the flight—Sir Ross Smith as pilot, his brother Sir Keith Smith as navigator and two skilled army mechanics as engineers; but what will be news to a good many of his admirers is the fact that, at the conclusion of his flight, the great airman divided the £10,000 he had won as prize equally between all four. "14,000 Miles Through the Air" should appeal to readers juvenile no less than to readers adult.

LETTERS TO SOMEBODY. By the Rt. Hon. Guy Fleetwood Wilson, G.C.I.E., K.C.B., K.C.M.G. 7s. 6d. (Cassell).

There is something curt, unimaginative and strenuously honest about these scattered reminiscences. They suggest a sound and honourable man of affairs, even, valuable and without nerves. Perhaps we get on friendliest terms with our author when we read of his bitter chagrin on finding himself too old to go out and fight in the last war. Kitchener, in reply to an urgent request, sent the reply, "We have no use for grandfathers." Nevertheless Sir Guy made himself useful to his country. And for the last four years he has been serving on a tribunal appointed to adjudicate on Naval Prizes. "My services," says he with urbanity, "have always been utilised in regard to matters with which I was not conversant." There are several excellent stories in the book, notably that about the smack a tired Queen Victoria felt obliged to administer to her loyal servant when he forgot his drill at the investiture, while staring at the wonderfully worked spaniel on the worsted-covered stool on which he knelt.

SONGS OF THE BIRDS. By Walter Garstang. Illustrated by J. A. Shepherd. 6s. (The Bodley Head.)

Mr. Walter Garstang has attempted a well-nigh impossible task—that of analysing the calls of birds. "A bird that seems to say 'Whit!' to one man, says 'Chip!' to another." "But," he adds happily, after having explained the differences that exist between a bird's mouth and ours, "after all, it makes no serious difference whether we write 'Pew-it' or 'Tew-it' for the plover's cry, or 'Teazle,' 'Cheedle Ee-chow' or 'Teacher' for the Great Tit's. Accuracy of phrasing is the point to be observed." After the interesting opening essay we pass on to the rhymes, each of which is given with a line of music representing a bird's song. The Wing-Song of the Tree Pipit is especially successful. All the rapid, clever sketches by Mr. Shepherd are full of life.

THE ENGLISH VILLAGE: THE ORIGIN AND DECAY OF ITS COMMUNITY. By Harold Peake, F.S.A. 15s. net. (Benn Brothers.)

In this volume the author traces the evolution of the English village from its origins in the long distant past. Utilising the recent results of anthropological and archæological research, he contends that the evolution of the village community in this island was the result of a struggle between two races with different ideals—the democratic, domesticated, peace-loving Alpine race that entered Europe from Asia Minor before the close of the palæolithic age, and the adventurous, sport-loving, autocratic Nordics who emanated from the broad steppe-lands of South Russia and Turkestan. How far Mr. Peake's theory is accurate we do not presume to judge; but it is both interesting and persuasive. The ordinary reader, however, will feel more at home with the author when in his later chapters he describes—often with many vivid and picturesque details—the village community in England in Saxon and Norman and mediæval times; and then proceeds to record the decay of the manor and to follow step by step the disintegration of village life during the period of the Industrial Revolution and its complete dissolution in the nineteenth century. He maintains that the nineteenth century witnessed the lowest state of degradation that the village community in this country has passed through; but he asserts that between 1890 and 1900 the tide seems to have turned. Few changes were visible by 1914; but the war seems to have aroused among the people a greater sense of the need for association. The effects of this upon village life are becoming daily more marked, "and perhaps, before long," he says, "we may see the birth of a new community in the English village." Mr. Peake concludes a very interesting and bracing book with his own suggestions for the ideal village of the future.

THE CHILDREN OF ODIN. By Padraic Colum. Illustrated by Willy Pogany. 6s. net. (Harrap.)

All young people who have enjoyed Mr. Colum's "The Children's Homer" will turn eagerly to this new book of his in which he retells the great Norse sagas. Mr. Colum has had difficult material to deal with in "The Children of Odin," but he has dealt with it in a manner which is entirely successful and children will find they can follow with ease the wonderful stories of the gods who dwelt in Asgard; of the plottings of Loki, "the doer of good and the doer of evil"; of the wanderings of Odin and how he sacrificed his right eye so that he might drink a draught from the Well of Wisdom; of the sword of the Volsungs; and of the final destruction of Asgard. It is an absorbing book illustrated with fascinating pictures by Willy Pogany.

SOME NEW EVIDENCES FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL. By the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas. 10s. 6d. net. (Collins.)

This is a book which is causing a stir in Nonconformist circles, as coming from a well-known Wesleyan minister who, as member of the Psychical Research Society, has put mediumistic evidences for spirit existence to rigid tests during the last three years. His late father, the Rev. John Drayton Thomas, purported to communicate with him through the famous medium, Mrs. Osborne Leonard, and to prove his reality as an independent intelligence the communicator originated a series of novel experiments. These consisted of what are now widely known as "Book tests" and "Newspaper tests." Thus the spirit, through the medium, called his son's attention to certain pages of closed books in the son's library. On returning home and picking out the book—usually indicated by its place on the shelf—Mr. Drayton Thomas would find words and phrases extraordinarily appropriate to the message the father desired to send. Tests of this kind in great variety were given and verified, the resulting conclusion being that chance coincidence could not explain the matter. Then the father gave certain names and allusions which would appear in certain places on the front page of *The Times* on the following day. These also proved correct on too many occasions to permit of the coincidence theory. Moreover, at the time the messages were given *The Times* front page was not "made up." Sir William Barrett writes an introduction to the book, expressing his conviction of the conclusive nature of the Book and Newspaper tests and giving some remarkable instances in his own experience.

FOUR FAMOUS MYSTERIES. By Sir John Hull, Bart. 10s. 6d. (Nisbet.)

Sir John Hull has brought together in volume form a quartet of historico-romantic monographs eminently fitted in subject, style and treatment to grace the dignified pages of any one of what frivolous critics have called "the more awful reviews." One sketch, the first, has admittedly done so already, and if the editors of the *Nineteenth Century's* rivals have had their chance of snapping up the others and missed, they obviously do not know what is good for them. As it is, "The Mystery of Tilsit" and the remaining papers deal similarly with historic mysteries, though the author's method in attempting to unravel these tangled skeins varies somewhat in each case. In every instance Sir John gives himself a brief and talks to it steadfastly, his advocacy, sometimes ponderous but at times displaying considerable acumen, proving occasionally convincing, occasionally not. In the light of his examination we do not suppose that any jury of ordinary citizens would jib at identifying D'Antraigues with the mysterious agent from whom Canning learnt what passed between the two Emperors on the famous Niemen raft so quickly as to counter the conspiracy there hatched against perfidious Albion. As to Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey's murder, the notes that are now before us are interesting to the historian but, as their author admits, fail to take us anywhere particular in assigning the guilt

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of a crime, that was very much more than a nine days' wonder, to any particular individual or even party. Paul Louis Courier's case is different. A very few years served to remove misconception as to the identity and motives of the actual criminals, the one point then left obscure, i.e. as to the complicity or otherwise of the widow, remaining in our view still unproven, though Sir John appears to think scarcely any doubt exists by which the unfortunate lady is entitled to benefit. Similarly, the explanation of how our Viennese Envoy, Mr. Bathurst, must have met his death on the return from a mission rendered abortive by the disaster of Austerlitz, leaves us still wondering, partly at the Machiavellian policy imputed to the British Government, and hardly less at an old soldier like the author boggling at the use of the word "overalls" to designate the strapped trousers usually worn by men of fashion then, as for long afterwards.

Music.

ARNOLD BAX.

By RODNEY BENNETT.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Arnold Bax.**

IN the chronology of the renaissance of English music, in which he has taken an important, and promises to take a still more important part, Arnold Bax stands out in a certain isolation. Born just under thirty-nine years ago in London, where he studied piano with Matthay and composition with Corder, he comes after the brilliant group, including Vaughan Williams, Holst, Ireland and Bridge, who graduated together under Sir Charles Stanford at the Royal College; and before the group of younger moderns who number Eugène Goossens and Arthur Bliss as their most brilliant exponents.

Temperamentally, too, he would appear to stand in some respects alone, in that his sympathies are apparently limited and that he has adventured in comparatively few musical forms. He shows no interest in the reviving enthusiasm for opera, partly on account of his objection to the constraints imposed by the limitations and conventions of the form, partly through his attitude to words in relation to music. It is this last, a sense of the incompatibility of music and poetry, or at least poetry that matters, which is at the root of his diminishing interest in song writing. Apart from his songs, to the published number of about forty, of which I intend to say nothing here as I hope to treat them in a later article, he has paid so little attention to vocal writing that the proportions of a short article allow no more than a passing mention of "Fatherland," a setting for choir and orchestra of Clifford Bax's translation of a poem by Runeberg, "Enchanted Summer," based upon a portion of Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," and a series of carols which are to have first performance during the coming autumn.

During the last four years the name of Arnold Bax has come before the larger public chiefly as a composer of piano music, partly owing to his good fortune in finding an admirable interpreter in the person of Miss Harriet Cohen, who, besides including in her recitals much of his work for piano solo, produced with the Bohemian Quartet the Piano Quintet shortly to be issued by Murdoch, which the composer places with the second Piano Sonata (in G) among his most representative work. As might be expected from a pianist-composer, Bax's work is as pianistic as the exigencies of modernism allow, and not unnecessarily difficult. If its popularity remains comparatively narrow this will be due less to its keyboard difficulty than to the fact that his style requires discrimination. It will remain caviare to lovers of easy effects and broad obviousness precisely by reason of its peculiar charm. It is atmospheric, subtle, fantastic, elusive, and hard to read because it is apparently very involved. As is the case with all music that is worth disentangling from the printed page, the involution is more apparent than real. The analysis and method are complicated, the synthesis and result simple. The themes are essentially simple and diatonic, but they are treated with a wealth of subdued colour and—but "ingenuity" is hardly the word to apply to music which appears so curiously free from conscious mental processes in development. Briefly, the puzzle is difficult to take to pieces, easier to put together again. Which is the essence of a good puzzle.

Like most of his music, a great deal of Arnold Bax's piano compositions might be termed studies in half-lights. "May Night in the Ukraine," "The Happy Forest," "Sleepy Head," "Winter Waters"—the titles suggest the style. Lighter moods are mirrored in "The Princess's Rose Garden," "Apple Blossom Time," "A Mountain Mood" and the sunny "Nereid." "Gopak" and "In a Vodka Shop" are brilliant excursions into vivacious impressionism, and "Whirligig" is outstanding as a piece of real buoyancy. But whatever the subject the method is roughly the same. It can best be suggested by quoting the composer's direction to one of them: "This piece must be played as simply as its elaborateness of detail will allow. No harmonic points should be made, and the accompaniment figures generally should be kept wholly subservient to the melodic line."

Of Arnold Bax's chamber music, which includes quintets for piano and strings, and harp and strings, and trios for violin, viola and piano and flute, viola and harp and of his solo works for instruments other than the piano, there is no room to speak if space is to be left for any consideration of his orchestral work.

The most interesting are the variations for piano and orchestra, which are down for performance in the Promenade season, and the viola concerto so brilliantly played by Tertis at a Philharmonic concert last winter. Whether it was successful or not, whether the viola is capable of complete success as a solo instrument with orchestra—these are matters for discussion. But, whatever the result, the fact remains that the work was deeply interesting as an attempt to explore the possibilities of a neglected instrument. Such cursory notice matters the less because Bax will stand or fall by his work for orchestra, which interests him most and displays his powers most completely.

The points which emerge most strongly from a consideration of this are his mastery of orchestral technique and the consistency of his style. The first was interestingly shown when he entered into competition with the Russians in orchestration for the Diaghileff ballet and in "The Truth about the Russian Dancers," and showed himself their equal in dexterity. The aplomb with which he accommodated himself to their requirements made one wonder if he might fall a victim to the fate which seems to threaten so many of the clever young servants of the ballet, and in the fascination of mere colour, with scenery and choreography to pull him through, gradually come to deal in brilliant and formless superficiality. The fact that he did not was still another evidence of his consistency. He kept on his private path. The temptation to leave it was lessened by the fact that, unlike some less lucky composers, he has not had to wait for performance. His orchestral work has been steadily produced since the pre-war days when he began to make his name with works performed at the concerts promoted by Ellis and Rutland Boughton, and by Sir Dan Godfrey at Bournemouth.

Again the titles are interesting: "In the Faery Hills," "Spring Fire," "November Woods," "The Garden of Fand," "Tintagel." Like many of the piano compositions they draw their inspiration consciously from nature, though now on a broader scale. The titles are misleading, perhaps undesirable, in that they foreshadow a more specific programme than is suggested by the music itself. They must be accepted merely as vague indications; for even when, as in the case of "November Woods," the composer can trace the inception of the work to a dateable impression, the method is almost purely subjective. "November Woods" is a record of remembered impressions of "the dank and stormy ruin of nature in the Autumn." In "The Garden of Fand," which was heard at one of the admirable Goossens concerts last winter, the application to actual scenes is even less definite. Based ostensibly on an Irish legend, it sets out to reflect the sea, half Atlantic, half a sea that has no name. "Tintagel" I have not yet heard; first performed in London at one of the recent R. A. M. centenary concerts, it will probably be included in the forthcoming programmes of the Philharmonic Concerts, and may also replace the symphony which the composer intended for performance at the Leeds Festival but was unable to complete in time. This last, which, it may be inferred from the fact that it is to be nameless, will represent the composer's nearest approach to

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absolute music, is also likely to be heard during the winter in London. "November Woods," too, is down for repetition at a Promenade concert; so that, together with a representative concert of his work which is projected by his publishers for the autumn, there will be during the coming season an unusual opportunity of getting a comprehensive view of the work of a native composer. In the case of any this is as desirable as it is unfortunately rare; but in the case of Arnold Bax it is particularly fortunate for various reasons. His work falls into no very definite periods, but is, as I remarked earlier, remarkably consistent. This makes it difficult to trace his progress, for the impression of consistency may be produced by repetition or by gradual development. Again Bax is a composer whose very virtues make frequent performance necessary to his popularity; for reticent and elusive work can only be widely understood when it achieves familiarity. Chief interest naturally centres upon the new symphony. It will probably reveal the mastery of colour which is one of Bax's most obvious characteristics. It will probably show, to quote his own words, that his sympathies are to a marked degree extending from inanimate to human nature. Will it also show, as some of his more recent smaller works have shown, a further movement towards clarification and closeness of structure, a definite shedding of a certain diffuseness and vagueness of direction which lessen the appeal of some of his earlier work? It must be sufficient to add that the composer thinks this his best work; but then, as he said to me when discounting that statement: "I don't think there is much point in discussing one's music. Talking about it doesn't make any difference. I don't believe there is much undiscovered fine music. What is good finds its level and what isn't—finds its level, for all the talk. The work that you are doing always seems the best—except the one that you are going to do next." Which, though an uncomfortable doctrine from the point of view of the critic and interviewer, is after all the best working philosophy for the artist who means to do things.

SOME EMOTIONS AND A LANDSCAPE.*

Had anyone ten or twelve years ago associated landscape with music—not "programme" but abstract music—he might have been set down by the average amateur as mad. I remember a similar accusation being hurled against myself because I coupled the lovely "Val-d'Arno" landscape in the Tate Gallery with the idea of music. Vainly did I point out that, as Newton discovered nearly two centuries back, colour and pitch are identical. My friend regarded me with pitying contempt. Yet more and more nowadays one finds music invoked to aid the expression of those all but inexpressible thoughts which are aroused by glorious scenery, or great colour. True, the Wordsworthian aspect is generally present:

> "The clouds that wrap the setting sun
> Do take a soberer colouring from an eye
> That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality."

And you will find these very lines exemplified in "Twilight It Is." In this exquisite song you can practically see the dusk, dim landscape; you can feel the dew in the air; you can smell the fragrance of the rick-yard "when the drone is still." Twilight it is, in truth—transmuted into sound—suffused with waning lights—surcharged with wistful remembrance of the departed. Melody, memory, soft grey tints are one; and they are rendered here with the simplicity of perfection. . . . In "Tewkesbury Road" we have a charming pendant to the above—a gay, lilting ditty of the open road, buoyant and breathing *plein air*. A delightful melody this; Mr. Wightman writes for the voice, as for the accompanist, with great skill and sympathy. There is nothing weird, *outré* or bizarre about his music; he does not strain after descriptive effects by dint of queer chromatic progressions. What he writes is "suant," as the Isle of Wight folk say—following the thought naturally—just right. After the fantastic posturings in which some neo-Georgian composers indulge, it is refreshing to encounter these little cases of pure beauty.

A well-known musical critic recently enounced his opinion that a song is popular in proportion to its reminiscences of other songs. He substantiated his theory by examples from some modern favourites—and from their origins. On this hypothesis, Mr. Walter Butler's works should be most successful; for echoes of other melodies inhabit them, and the result is distinctly pleasing. Very pretty and tuneful they are, especially "Have You Seen Her Passing By?" (What a contrast to Cyril Scott's urgent and cynical "Have You Seen Him Pass By?") This is dainty in touch and sentiment, running easily under voice and fingers; a cheerful, useful addition to the amateur's repertoire. "Loreen," by the same composer, is treated in the "big bow-wow" style, with conventional declamatory heartbreak, which the thing is hardly strong enough to support. However, the questing tenor will welcome it. One recollects O. W. Holmes's metaphor about trying to grow an oak tree in a flower-pot. Yet Mr. Walter Butler should have a firm hold upon his public.

Messrs. Augener possess a notable reputation for their female voice part-songs, which are usually high class and of fine quality. Those in hand, by Havergal Brian, justify one's expectations. Where Mr. Brian has used lyrics by William Blake, he is especially happy. "The Fly," of an airy delicacy in the accompaniment, is of a quaint simplicity in the voice part, which is admirably allied to the words. "Pastoral" is clever and attractive, if not (to my mind) so tenderly melodious as Amy E. Horrocks's setting of the same verses, which the same publishers (I think) brought out a few years ago. "The River" is a varied and telling effort, much above the ordinary level of school songs. The finale is rather weak compared to the rest of the piece; but taken as a whole "The River" is highly satisfactory. "Spring" is a new expression of Nash's old-world lines; perhaps not of equal importance with the other three part songs, but brightly and appropriately treated. Havergal Brian has a decided gift for this sort of work; which, being necessarily of a restricted character, dealing with birds, flowers, seasons, etc. (for love-songs are usually taboo in schools), requires all the more ingenious handling if it is to be—as his compositions are—fresh, artistic, and spontaneous.

Taking the above compositions in the order of their subjects, one finds a signal absence of direct personal emotion—or rather, of its expression. The poignant pathos which inspires "Twilight It Is" is suggested rather than accentuated; the *joie de vivre* of "Tewkesbury Road" strikes no deep note. The first of Mr. Butler's songs might refer to any casual summer girl; in "Loreen" the agony is piled up so high that it defeats its own object—for shouting "Loreen is dead!" on upper notes doesn't convey

*1 "Twilight It Is." Song. Words by John Masefield. Music by John Wightman. 2s. net.—"Tewkesbury Road." Song. Words by John Masefield. Music by John Wightman. 2s. net.—"Have You Seen Her Passing By?" Song. Words by P. J. O'Reilly. Music by Walter Butler. 2s. net.—"Loreen." Song. Words by Foster Richardson. Music by Walter Butler. 2s. net. (Lengnick.)

*2 "The Fly." Unison Song with Pianoforte Accompaniment. Words by William Blake. Music by Havergal Brian. 3d. net.—"Pastoral—The Shepherd." Three-Part Song for Female Voices. Words by William Blake. Music by Havergal Brian. 3d. net.—"The River." Two-Part Song for Female Voices. Words by Gerald Cumberland. Music by Havergal Brian. 6d. net.—"Spring." Two-Part Song for Female Voices. Words by Thomas Nash. Music by Havergal Brian. 6d. net. (Augener.)

the authentic touch of bereavement to anyone who has experienced it.—" I tell you, hopeless grief is passionless." In the school songs we return to the safe hither side of sensations, and, sitting on the fence, survey the pleasing pastoral scenery. . . . Can any conclusion be formed from these facts? If so, it is, I believe, that modern music, struggling towards its unknown goal, and seeking its ultimate expression along strange untravelled ways, is prone to rest awhile in peaceful places—to take breath for the journey before it. One cannot be always at high tension; and to most of us landscape is less fatiguing than emotions.

MAY BYRON.

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Three charming little songs of the drawing-room type.

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power of constructing tragic scenes—in "Pasteur" for example—where the deepest and most serious emotions are irresistibly moved, Sacha as a playwright is particularly happy in light and elegant comedy, situations of cynical wit and charming impertinence, not satire, but amusing flicks at manners and morals in the true way of the boulevard.

Lucien Guitry spent ten years in St. Petersburg, at the Théâtre Michel. That was the making of him. It united the polished mastery of his technique with the primitive vigour, the exuberant and youthfully daring emotional sincerity of the Slav. It was like a thorough mingling of two very different substances to produce by chemical action an entirely new and mysterious substance with wonderful attributes—genius. Before that he was but a clever *jeune premier* with exceptional physical advantages. Afterwards he was able to become, on the death of Constant Coquelin in 1909, the unchallenged chief of French actors. Guitry's art is original. He has learned all the rules and absorbed all the traditions of the French theatre, but that he might be free to discard the conventions and form his own individual methods. Guitry has always dared to carry out his own ideas, in his life as in his acting. Born in Paris in 1860, he became a student at the Conservatoire, gaining a second in tragedy and comedy. He should have remained another year, but he was impatient with the formal instruction and conventional histrionics. So he left, notwithstanding that a penalty of £400 was thereby incurred. He entered the Gymnase, and there, at the age of eighteen, he made his debut as Armand Duval in "La Dame aux Camélias."

Photo by Stanley's Press Agency. **M. Lucien Guitry.**

Guitry possesses striking physical advantages—a massive figure, a handsome head. His gestures can be extraordinarily impressive, and they are always full of subtle significance. He does not need to speak to express clearly and eloquently thoughts and emotions. As he sits and listens to a conversation, his way of disposing himself, the movements of his hands, the indescribably revealing expressions flickering across his face convey the ideas that pass through his mind. It is psychological acting. It is as if Henry James had written melodrama and Parisian comedy, and his novels were dramatised. "There is something thrilling in the way in which he opens a letter," said Charles Dawbarn some years ago, "something impressive in his manner of receiving a visitor, as if a world of fate hung upon the news he brought." That is his secret. What would be, in the hands of another actor, a crude harrowing of the feelings becomes a tremendous drama of souls, a machine-made comedy with stock characters and age-old situations is invested with a sparkling gaiety it does not in reality possess. If one has read the play before, he brings a vivid colour to the faded characters and a reality to the action one did not dream they were capable of holding. His acting is the perfection of make-believe. The illusion is complete, whereas life has always many aspects of unreality. The highest acting is life-like and yet unlike life, with added significance and proportion which changes life into art, a scientifically produced photograph into a version that manifests the inner meaning of men and events.

For some years Guitry was associated with Sarah Bernhardt, acting with her both in Paris and London. He was married, by the way, at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. The first play he had appeared in as a youth was "La Dame aux Camélias," and this was now the one in which, with Sarah Bernhardt, he scored a success. But his reputation became really great when "la Divine," while on one of her American tours, left him in charge of the Théâtre de la Renaissance. Later he was for a short time producer at the Comédie Française, but a revolt among the actors ended this phase. Guitry is not fitted for the essential routine and untiring diplomacy of a stage-director. Only a few of the parts in which he appeared can be mentioned. In "Le Juif Polonais" he was as powerful as Irving in its English version, "The Bells," but in another fashion. Anatole France's "Crainquebille" is a pathetic costermonger, whom all the excellent machinery of our excellent civilisation—our just laws to protect the State and our efficient police system to enforce them—combines to crush mercilessly, as a victim offered for the greatest good of the greatest number. To make, in Lavedan's "Servir," Colonel Falin's eloquent patriotism thrilling, when it might so easily have overstepped the mark into mock-heroics, was an achievement. Then there was Capus's "Monsieur Piégois," who might have been created by W. J. Locke, an attractive scoundrel of a casino proprietor, cunning and candid, unscrupulous and genial, an endearing rogue. He portrayed Coupeau, the drink-maniac, in Zola's "L'Assommoir" as successfully as Cortelon, the scandal-broken politician, in Bernstein's "La Griffe." After his sensational realism as Brachard, the vulgar and brutal "successful man," in Bernstein's "Samson," whose only method to attain any end is force, who fights only with one weapon, his strength, and with that as savagely as a cave-dweller, Guitry could make, as Alexandre Merital, the tender sentiment and impossibly romantic plot of Bernstein's

"L'Assaut" credible. It seemed beyond human capacity to play both these rôles as Guitry played them.

But Guitry has, of course, his limitations. When, after Coquelin's death, he went to the Porte St. Martin and created Rostand's "Chantecler," he won a success as success with other actors is reckoned, but for him it was only a half-success. The symbolism, the poetry of the play was lost. He invested the character with his own vigour, strutted and crowed with absolutely convincing realism. It was not the "Chantecler" of Rostand, but of Guitry, and a much less intricate, much less profound person. So in the elaborately foreign environment of "Kismet" he remained a great French actor playing a part very cleverly; he did not become Hadj, the beggar.

Guitry possesses two powers in a marvellous degree—observation and memory. He knows every word and every action of every character in a play. He can act a long play alone without a glance at the book, taking every part, changing his voice and manner to suit each one with indescribably amusing mimicry. Let him do it behind a screen, and the listener would be convinced that he was overhearing a whole company at rehearsal. Even when watching, so subtle is his impersonation one forgets that it is only one man. His observation is intent, detailed, prehensile. He seizes in a moment an incident, an encounter or a quarrel or a snatch of conversation, as he strolls along the boulevard, and he can reproduce it with absolute fidelity and the something more that fills it with a world of tragedy or shattering humour. Those friends who are privileged to visit his home in the Avenue Elisée Reclus know how delightful it is to stimulate his reminiscent mood—memories of the Paris of forty years ago up till now, and all the men and women of those many years, of the countries of South America, of his sojourn in Russia, of London. There in his beautiful house overlooking the Champ de Mars, among his treasures of pictures and bric-à-brac, a superb collection, one may meet Lucien Guitry the man and find him as remarkable as Lucien Guitry the actor.

GUILTY SOULS. By Robert Nichols. 7s. (Chatto & Windus.)

Mr. Nichols has really made two plays. The first—which might be entitled "Guilty!"—is a crook-sketch about a pair of swindling solicitors, one of whom betrays the other at the climax of a well written and highly dramatic scene. The second—"Souls" it may be called—a psychological monologue rather than a play, is the frightful remorse of a treacherous friend who, obsessed to the point of madness by his guilty conscience, is dragged upward through ecstasies of religious conviction which culminate in his own confession, and in the ruin of several other lives. The two stories, each finely imagined, fail to combine: not only because they are of different types, but because they are about different individuals. Sir Hector, vividest of the earlier group, drops out; Lois, Clara and Rupert, ciphers at first, only begin to develop in the second section, where for dramatic purposes they are brand-new characters; the swindler himself and his poor dupe change rôles, each developing along lines quite unsuggested in the previous play. The division is absolute.

So much for the craftsmanship, of which frank criticism is invited by the author's preface. But that is not all. The play's spiritual challenge strikes deeper; its white-hot sincerity commands respect; but in my case, at least, it

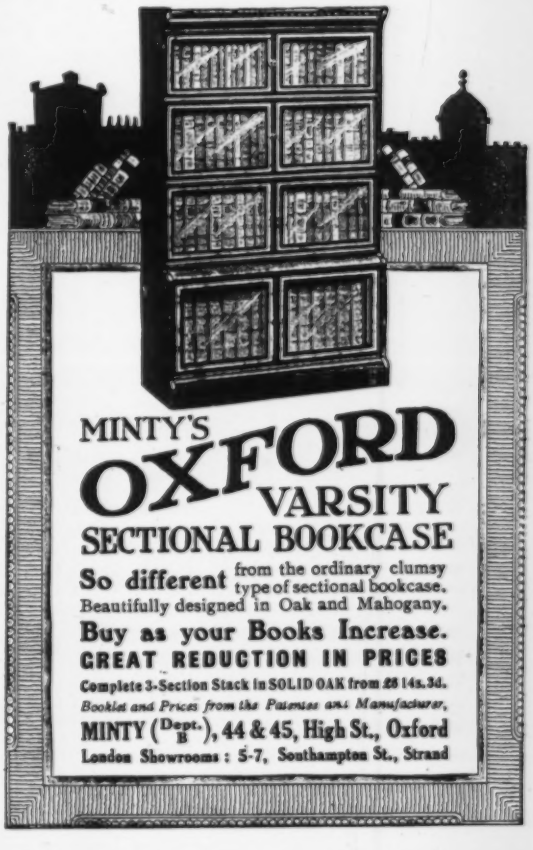

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Photo by Malcom Arbuthnot. **Mr. Robert Nichols.**

does not carry conviction. This damned soul, so sharp-set on his own salvation, leaves me strangely hostile. I cannot believe that, in the evolution of society, individual redemption is so all-important. Granting its importance, I cannot believe the man to be on the right track, or to be other than an entranced super-egotist, who would achieve his own redemption at the cost of uprooting other and innocent lives. I cannot believe that Oswald Bentley was not a better member of society as a swindling solicitor than as an embarrassingly inspired salvationist. In short, I echo the protest of Shaw's Heartbreak-Houser in similar case—" it is neither just nor right that we should be put to a lot of inconvenience to gratify your moral enthusiasm, my friend. You had better get out, while you have the chance."

You may complain that I make this a personal question. I do. The major theme of " Guilty Souls " is too deeply spiritual to be otherwise treated. Faith challenges faith to the personal issue which lies, not between Mr. Nichols's craftsmanship and any canons of criticism, but between his religious sense and that of each individual reader. I differ absolutely from Mr. Nichols's conclusions; but I will differ honestly, begging the question neither by vague critical generalities nor by the shallow mockery which, though he seems to anticipate it, the author's sincerity will surely put to shame. His book is nakedly, sublimely honest. But its personal challenge must be taken up afresh by each separate reader. Criticism is dumb.

GRAHAM SUTTON.

THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE. At the Palace Theatre.

When a famous book is presented in dramatic form by the makers of moving pictures the result is too often disappointing. Frequently the failure is due more to the impossibility of " translating " the author's atmosphere to the screen than to a lack of perception on the part of the producer. But the Rex Ingram production of Ibañez's great book leaves almost nothing to be desired. Miss June Mathis, in adapting the work for the camera, has shown excellent taste in her selection of incidents, and the producer has caught the spirit of the story very successfully. The war scenes in northern France are wonderfully well done, and there is a refreshing absence of exaggeration throughout. Particularly fine acting is done by Rudolph Valentino as Julio Desnoyers—indeed the whole cast is excellent. Alice Terry as Marguerite Laurier succeeds in being amorous without being absurd. This book is perhaps as severe a test of the film-maker as could be selected, and the success of the film is a feather in the cap of the man responsible for its production.

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